CNMI Salvation Army Thanksgiving Meal Distribution. PAGE 2
Isla Montessori's 1st Adult Education event set Dec. 12. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

# Saipan Tribune

$1

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIV, Issue No. 240

www.saipantribune.com | MONDAY DECEMBER 2, 2024 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune

# CUC sees $1.9M in losses

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. reports that following the first month of fiscal year 2025, it saw a net operating loss of over $1.9 million.

Terlaje

Last week, CUC held a regular board meeting where they discussed a number of things including financial reports.

According to CUC chief financial officer Betty Terlaje, as of October, CUC saw a net operating loss of over

See CUC on Page 4

## Decomposing body found on Thanksgiving Day

MARK RABAGO

Police were alerted to the discovery of the decomposing body of a 75-year-old Caucasian male at Zen Apartments in Gualo Rai on Thanksgiving last Thursday.

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Public Safety confirmed rumors that a dead body was found at the Zen Apartments in Gualo Rai during Thanksgiving celebrations last Thursday.

*Saipan Tribune* learned from DPS assistant chief of police and acting public information officer Simon T. Manacop that the body of a 76-year-old Caucasian male was found in a state of decomposition last Thursday.

Manacop said that DPS received a call from the apartment's maintenance staff around 10am on

See BODY on Page 4

## Trump stance on diversity could lead to marginalized LGBTQ community

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pride Marianas' Roberto Santos, left, during an undated event of Pride Marianas.

By RACQUEL H. FLOYD
raxfloyd@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The founder of Marianas Business Network said president-elect Donald J. Trump threat of dismantling Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, or DEI, protections may

See TRUMP on Page 4

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Last week, the Saipan and Northern Island Legislative Delegation held a regular session where House Local Bill 23-68 was introduced and placed on calendar for a vote.

## SNILD appropriates $75K to DPS

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation has unanimously voted in favor of passing House Local Bill 23-68 which essentially appropriates funds collected from e-gaming local license fees to the Department of Public Safety for operations.

Last week, the delegation held a regular session where House Local Bill 23-68 was

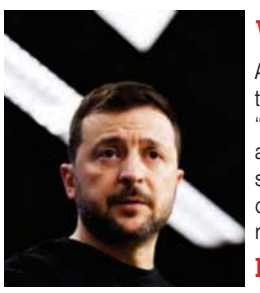
See SNILD on Page 4

## INSIDE

### BUSINESS

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will feature CNMI delegate-elect Kimberlyn King-Hinds during its December general membership meeting scheduled for this Wednesday, Dec. 4, from 11:30am to 1pm at Taga Hall of World Resort Saipan.

PAGE 9



### WORLD

An offer of NATO membership to territory under Kyiv's control would end "the hot stage of the war" in Ukraine, but any proposal to join the military alliance should be extended to all parts of the country that fall under internationally recognized borders.

PAGE 10

### LIFE & STYLE

Buffalo Bills quarterback Josh Allen and actor Hailee Steinfeld posted a photo to their Instagram followers on Friday—20.3 million for Steinfeld and a mere 1.3 million for Allen—of Allen on one knee proposing marriage.

PAGE 11

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

# CNMI Salvation Army Thanksgiving Meal Distribution

CHRYSTAL MARINO

CNMI Salvation Army senior soldier Luke John Agulto Lizama and volunteers smile during this year's mobile Thanksgiving meal distribution last Thursday at the Garapan Fishing Base across Kristo Rai Church.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Volunteers help distribute food at the CNMI Salvation Army's mobile Thanksgiving meal distribution at the Garapan Fishing Base across Kristo Rai Church.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Dozens gather for the CNMI Salvation Army's mobile Thanksgiving meal distribution at the Garapan Fishing Base across Kristo Rai Church.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

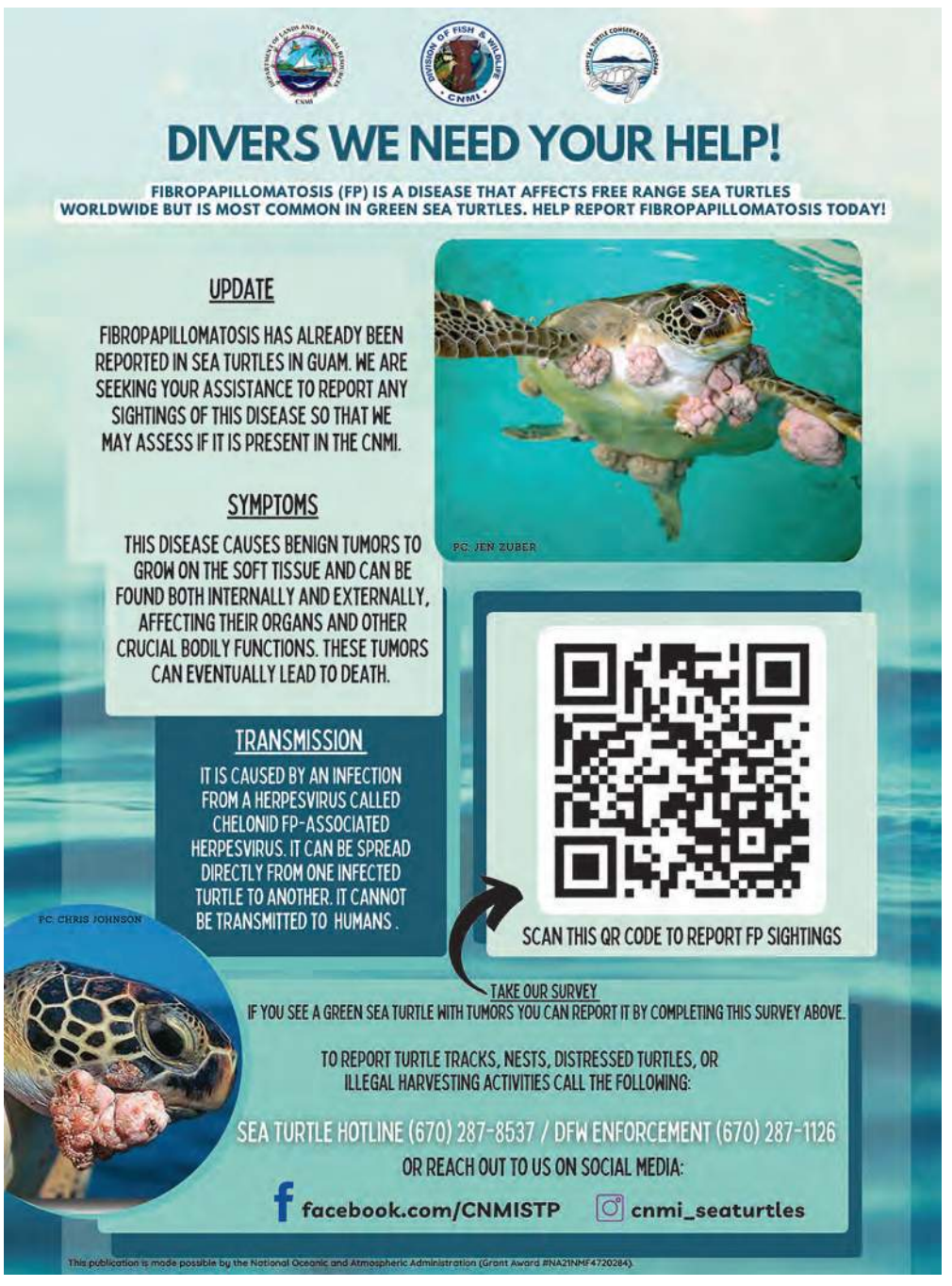
Hundreds line up for the CNMI Salvation Army 's mobile Thanksgiving meal distribution at the Garapan Fishing Base across Kristo Rai Church.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Long lines and scorching heat, but grateful smiles were on the faces of those gathered for the CNMI Salvation Army's mobile Thanksgiving meal distribution at the Garapan Fishing Base across Kristo Rai Church.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Salvation Army senior soldier Luke John Agulto Lizama hands out Thanksgiving meals at the Salvation Army's mobile Thanksgiving meal distribution at the Garapan Fishing Base across Kristo Rai Church.


DIVERS WE NEED YOUR HELP!
FIBROPAPILLOMATOSIS (FP) IS A DISEASE THAT AFFECTS FREE RANGE SEA TURTLES WORLDWIDE BUT IS MOST COMMON IN GREEN SEA TURTLES. HELP REPORT FIBROPAPILLOMATOSIS TODAY!
UPDATE
FIBROPAPILLOMATOSIS HAS ALREADY BEEN REPORTED IN SEA TURTLES IN GUAM. WE ARE SEEKING YOUR ASSISTANCE TO REPORT ANY SIGHTINGS OF THIS DISEASE SO THAT WE MAY ASSESS IF IT IS PRESENT IN THE CNMI.
SYMPTOMS
THIS DISEASE CAUSES BENIGN TUMORS TO GROW ON THE SOFT TISSUE AND CAN BE FOUND BOTH INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY, AFFECTING THEIR ORGANS AND OTHER CRUCIAL BODILY FUNCTIONS. THESE TUMORS CAN EVENTUALLY LEAD TO DEATH.
PC. JEN ZUBER
TRANSMISSION
IT IS CAUSED BY AN INFECTION FROM A HERPESVIRUS CALLED CHELONID FP-ASSOCIATED HERPESVIRUS. IT CAN BE SPREAD DIRECTLY FROM ONE INFECTED TURTLE TO ANOTHER. IT CANNOT BE TRANSMITTED TO HUMANS.
SCAN THIS QR CODE TO REPORT FP SIGHTINGS
PC. CHRIS JOHNSON
TAKE OUR SURVEY
IF YOU SEE A GREEN SEA TURTLE WITH TUMORS YOU CAN REPORT IT BY COMPLETING THIS SURVEY ABOVE.
TO REPORT TURTLE TRACKS, NESTS, DISTRESSED TURTLES, OR ILLEGAL HARVESTING ACTIVITIES CALL THE FOLLOWING:
SEA TURTLE HOTLINE (670) 287-8537 / DFW ENFORCEMENT (670) 287-1126
OR REACH OUT TO US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:
facebook.com/CNMISTP
cnmi_seaturtles
This publication is made possible by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Grant Award #NA21NMF4720284).

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Warm Thanksgiving lunches were distributed to those gathered for CNMI Salvation Army's mobile meal distribution at the Garapan Fishing Base across Kristo Rai Church.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Happy smiles at the Salvation Army's mobile Thanksgiving meal distribution at the Garapan Fishing Base across Kristo Rai Church.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Long lines quickly build at the CNMI Salvation Army's mobile Thanksgiving meal distribution at the Garapan Fishing Base across Kristo Rai Church.

# Local

# Isla Montessori's 1st Adult Education event set Dec. 12

Isla Montessori Saipan is excited to invite its enrolled families and any interested adults to its first Adult Education event of the school year 2024-25. It will be held on Thursday, Dec. 12, 2024 at Isla Montessori's Children's House located in Dandan on Flores Street. This interactive event will begin at 5:30pm. Our first Adult Education event is entitled, "How to Have Meaningful Conversations with Your Child."

Speaking with children about school, or many topics, can be challenging. Their responses are often short and lacking information that we are seeking. Through role playing, we will provide some tips and strategies for you to use that can help create meaningful and informative conversations with your child while creating connections with you, and not just about school but on many topics.

To learn more, join Isla Montessori in the Children's House at Isla Montessori in Dandan on Thursday, Dec.

See ISLA on Page 4

## Scheduled power service interruption for Tinian on Dec. 4

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to inform the general public that there will be a scheduled power service interruption on Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2024.

**Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2024**

- Power Service Interruption Time: 7am-12pm
- Area(s) Affected: Feeder 4
- Water Well(s) Affected: None
- Purpose: To allow CUC linemen to de-energize utility lines and upgrade the power distribution system.

CUC appreciates the public's cooperation and understanding as we work to ensure reliable service for our customers. For more information, contact the CUC Tinian Office at (670) 433-9265 or 433-9200, visit its website, and monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates. For emergencies, contact Customer Service at (670) 664-4282. ***(PR)***

CUC

The map of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s scheduled power service interruption on Tinian this Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2024.

## FAC remains the same for December 2024

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. announces that the Fuel Adjustment Charge remains the same at $0.21119 per kWh for the month of December. Although there has been an increase of 4.19% in the average fuel oil price, the increase did not equal or exceed a 4.5% differential of the average per gallon cost of fuel.

The FAC is one of two components that make up the CUC electric rate, which is strictly for fuel and fuel-related purchases. The second component is the CUC base rate, which has not increased since April 2014 and is used to fund operations, projects, debt services, or any nonfuel-related expenses. ***(PR)***

**CAFE SCHOLARSHIP HUNT**

NMC

Northern Marianas College's Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society recently hosted its inaugural Cafe Scholarship Hunt, designed to assist members in applying for PTK scholarships for the Fall 2024 term to boost the number of successful applicants in its Beta Lambda Psi Chapter.

NMC

PTK officers guided attendees through three key scholarship opportunities, which are exclusive to members of the PTK Honor Society. These consist of the general PTK Scholarship Application, which offers up to 11 scholarships for eligible students; the Oberndorf Scholarship, which supports students facing unexpected financial challenges; and the Nota Bene Scholarship, which celebrates excellence in writing and visual arts by PTK members.

## Saipan PACT Act registration starting on Jan. 8

Veterans Affairs' Pacific Islands Health Care System will hold PACT Act registration during the following days and times at the Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center:

- Jan. 8, 2025—12pm-4pm
- Jan. 9, 2025—8am-4pm
- Jan. 10, 2025—8am-4pm

Other services available during the PACT Act registration are the following:

- Health screenings
- Vaccination
- Diabetic foot checks
- Blood pressure checks
- VA benefits assistance

The PACT Act is a law that expands VA health care and benefits for veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances. This law helps us provide generations of veterans—and their survivors—with the care and benefits they've earned and deserve. And starting last March 5, 2024, they expanded VA health care to millions of veterans—years earlier than called for by the PACT Act.

For more information, call 1-800-214-1306. ***(PR)***


**NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION**
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp Website: http://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com

**AMENDMENT No. 1**

**INVITATION FOR BID (IFB)**
**NMHC IFB 2025-~~001~~ 002**

(This ad is paid by NMHC by HUD funds)

**BID SUBMISSION DATE & TIME:** December 03, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

**Vehicle Lease of 3-Sport Utility Vehicles (SUV) for the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program in Saipan**

Bid information and packet is available on November 18, 2024, at the NMHC website at www.nmhcgov.net by clicking on the "Procurement Tab" or at the CDBG-DR website at www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com.

The provisions of the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

Inquiries regarding this bid shall be submitted to Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer via email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net or facsimile at (670)234-9021, on or before September 10, 2024, no later than 10 a.m.

/s/ Jesse S. Palacios
Acting-Corporate Director

/s/ Merced "Marcie" M. Tomokane
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors



**NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION**
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

(This ad is paid for NMHC with HUD funds)

**NMHC RFP 2025-001**
**BID SUBMISSION DATE & TIME:** December 18, 10:00 a.m.

**"ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES"**

The Request for Proposals and Scope of Services will be available on November 18, 2024, at the NMHC website at www.nmhcgov.net by clicking on the "Procurement Tab" or by visiting the CDBG-DR website at www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com.

Inquiries or clarification regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing or email to Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer at officemanager@nmhcgov.net or submitted by facsimile to (670)234-9021 no later than 4:00 PM local time on December 06, 2024.

The provisions of the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer, at (670)234-6866/9447 or email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/
Jesse S. Palacios
Acting-Corporate Director
Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC)

/s/
Merced "Marcie" M. Tomokane
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors

## TRUMP

*From page 1*

have negative implications for workplaces and economic development.

"Rolling back DEI programs as proposed by Trump would have serious consequences for both businesses and the economy. DEI is not just about fair treatment but also about enabling businesses to attract top talent and foster innovation. Eliminating these protections and enforcing rigid gender policies could lead to regression in workplaces and negatively affect economic growth," said MBN founder and businessman PK Phommachanh in an interview.

Trump has expressed intentions to diminish the focus on diversity and legal protections for LGBTQ individuals, aiming to end current diversity, equity, and inclusion of DEI initiatives in government.

Phommachanh believes in the importance of DEI initiatives citing his experience as a senior director of HR in a global Fortune 500 company.

"I believe deeply in the importance of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. In my past career as a senior director of HR for a global Fortune 500 company, I saw firsthand how qualified individuals were sometimes overlooked due to their race, gender, or sexual orientation. Despite my efforts to create change, the culture remained restrictive. This experience ultimately led me to leave the company and work for a search firm committed to DEI, where I witnessed how businesses thrive when diverse talent is embraced."

He added that, as a business owner, he has seen how these initiatives directly affect the workforce even at the local level.

"In some places, stereotypes prevent local individuals from being hired. DEI educates and encourages companies to move beyond biases tied to ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, ensuring that businesses and communities are strengthened through diversity and inclusion," added Phommachanh.

Trump seeks to eliminate DEI programs, leveraging federal funding for government institutions and he plans to stop transgender participation in sports designated for girls, claiming this is a widespread issue despite lacking evidence, aims to revoke the Biden administration's expansions of Title IX protections for transgender students and wants legislation recognizing only two genders at birth are among Trump's stance on diversity and LGBTQ rights.

Meanwhile, Pride Marianas' Roberto Santos expressed his dismay about Trump's return to the presidency as he shared possible implications for marginalized communities.

According to Santos, Trump uses fear in politics and supports racist and anti-2SLGBTQIA+ policies that affect marginalized groups, including Chamorro and Carolinian peoples.

"I, personally, and along with many of my family and friends, am deeply discouraged. It is evident in his public speeches how he utilizes fear to encourage people to support racist, misogynist, anti-2SLGBTQIA+ policies and actions against marginalized peoples. Marginalized people include indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian peoples in the Marianas. It includes Chamorro and Carolinian immigrants to the United States. It includes our gay, lesbian, and trans children and relatives. It includes immigrants to the Marianas," said Santos

Santos added that there is a historical tendency in the U.S. to respond to fear of minorities with military presence and violence and despite issues with Kamala Harris, Trump is favored over her, showing a troubling preference for a convicted felon.

"And we know that historically the primary strategy of the United States is to respond to its fear of minorities with increased military presence and violence. Even as Kamala Harris presented her own problematic platform as a candidate, the U.S. is clear in its preference for a literal convicted felon who we had previously voted out of office over a woman."

Santos concluded that Pride Marianas will keep promoting marginalized voices and advocating for their rights.

"But I am ready to watch how this plays out. Maybe he will surprise us this time. How many times have you told yourself this about a man? In any case, it is important that we as activists and advocates for queer people, for women, for Indigenous Pacific islanders, for immigrants, for the environment, and for people with differing abilities that our work continues. And so, Pride Marianas will continue to center two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, questioning, intersex, asexual, gender nonconforming, indigenous, and other marginalized voices."

## ISLA

*From page 3*

12, 2024 at 5:30pm. Isla Montessori looks forward to seeing you.

Isla Montessori believes in an authentic Montessori approach to education that assists children in navigating through self, community, environmental, and cultural awareness so that they can become exceptional humans. Isla Montessori commits to a partnership with the island community as resources in creating conscious and well-rounded individuals.

To learn more about Isla Montessori and the programs it offers, visit Isla Montessori's webpage at https://www.islamontessori.org or call (670) 288.ISLA (4752). ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Isla Montessori Saipan is located along Flores St. in Dandan Village, Saipan.

## CUC

*From page 1*

$1.9 million.

"It's based off of revenue we billed from October and expenses we accrued in October," she said.

However, Terlaje says as the year progresses, the financial picture gets better but she was obligated to report this loss to the board during the meeting.

"Overtime, you see a better picture. However, it's my obligation to let the board know where we stand since October. There were other revenues that made up for it and so we didn't have net loss or net income. But I had to report that the operating revenue and operating expenses, there was a net operating loss there," she said.

CUC has a long list of outstanding accounts, one of the most notable being the CNMI government and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

Previously, CUC and the CNMI government signed a memorandum of agreement clearing most of the outstanding amounts owed by the central government to CUC.

The MOA outlines a framework where arrears owed by the CNMI central government to CUC for utility services rendered will be offset against arrears owed by CUC to the Office of the Public Auditor pursuant to 1 CMC ¬ß 7831, which provides that government corporations must remit 1% of their operations budget to OPA.

The CNMI Department of Finance has estimated that CUC owes about $18 million in arrears in outstanding public auditor fees. The exact amount is disputed between CUC and Finance, but both agree the balance is at least $10.9 million.

With CHCC, on the other hand, CUC continues to work with the agency to settle its over $68 million balance in utility arrears.

According to CUC executive director Kevin Watson, he and his team have been meeting with CHCC to discuss how they can catch up with their arrears.

Meanwhile, CUC CFO Terlaje shared that she and Watson has even brought up the possibility of waiving the penalties CHCC owes if CHCC agrees with certain terms and conditions.

Of course, Terlaje said this is all subject to an agreement between both parties.

In 2023, CUC signed an MOU with CHCC in which CHCC agreed to pay $525,000 a month to address over $53 million in utility arrears.

In a previous interview with Terlaje, she shared that CHCC's MOU with CUC expired last May.

Terlaje, during the interview, said in order to address arrears reflective of utility usage increase, a new memorandum of understanding with CHCC needs to be executed.

## BODY

*From page 1*

Thanksgiving Day. The staff informed officers that a foul odor had been coming out of the man's room, which prompted their response. Upon investigation, DPS shared that the man was reportedly seen about four days before the discovery. Manacop said that as of now they are "unable to determine exactly how many days the man has been deceased except that he was last seen four days prior to being reported."

He added that no foul play has been established

Manacop also said that they are still waiting on any word from the man's family or next of kin.

In just the past six months, the body has been the third male individual reported to be decomposing near or at his residence.

*Saipan Tribune* asked DPS about these findings and whether or not there was an update that can be shared about the cases. "For other cases... all has been cleared by [the Attorney General's Office] classified as natural deaths," he said

## SNILD

*From page 1*

introduced and placed on calendar for a vote.

The bill, introduced by Rep. Ralph Yumul (Ind-Saipan), essentially appropriates $205,000 from revenues collected for the Third Senatorial District (Saipan) pursuant to Saipan Local Law 22-06.

Saipan Local Law 22-06 essentially imposes a local license fee on all electronic gaming devices as defined in Title 6 section 3154 (a)(4), inclusive of poker amusement machines on the same e-gaming premises as defines in Title 6 section 3 l 56 (b), located within the Third Senatorial District.

Specifically, of the $205,000, $75,000 will be appropriated to DPS for operations while $120,000 will be appropriated to SNILD for its operations and $10,000 will go toward various projects within Precinct 3.

During the session, Rep. Marissa Flores (Ind-Saipan) pleaded for her colleagues to support the passage of the bill.

"I plea for the appropriation that will be given to DPS as I do understand there is a lame duck so we would need a majority for this to pass. The magic number is 16. Please support HLB 23-68

After a short discussion, the bill passed the delegation with 18 yes votes.

During a budget hearing earlier this year, DPS Commissioner Anthony Macaranas emotionally pleaded with the members of the House to help him provide officers with the resources needed to remain safe while carrying out their role in keeping the CNMI communities safe.

Initially, DPS submitted a budget request of $9.2 million to the Office of Management and Budget under the Office of the Governor.

However, the Office of the Governor proposed a budget of $5.6 million for DPS.

"The department currently needs a lot; from training, to equipment, to personnel, even to body armor that our officers need, there's a lot of needs. Even at night, I can't sleep thinking of my officers. Just over the weekend, a report of a citizen firing a gun randomly, not knowing if it's toward another person or an officer. I am responsible for the community and these officers. I just want the department to have everything it needs to meet the demands of the community," he said.

Macaranas expressed that his priority is funding training for officers.

"I need my officers to be in sync with today's challenges. There's a lot of things happening and yes funding is an issue. In the old days, they tell us to think about tomorrow and not to worry about today, this is what I'm doing, I'm thinking about our tomorrow. [I'm trying] to be an effective leader because the lives of our officers are under my watch," he said.

# UOG Press celebrates launch of 'Signs of Being' by CT Perez

The University of Press is launching "Signs of Being" by C.T. Perez, a collection of poetry, prose, and commentary that explores CHamoru cultural identity through the lens of ec(h)o literature, or literature that interprets signs in the natural environment as echoes from ancestors.

For Perez, this collection is a heartfelt attempt to articulate the unexplainable—the essence of CHamoru consciousness and spirit.

"It's an effort to reach that level of expression of what is in the heart and the soul of a terminal being," said Perez. "I'm facing closer to passing than I am to living. I've lived more than half my life and I'm quite comfortable saying that. It's beautiful to age. It's hard. It's a challenge, but we could say the same for CHamoru people—that we survived the many challenges and struggles, but we also are in the joy of life and the joy of being."

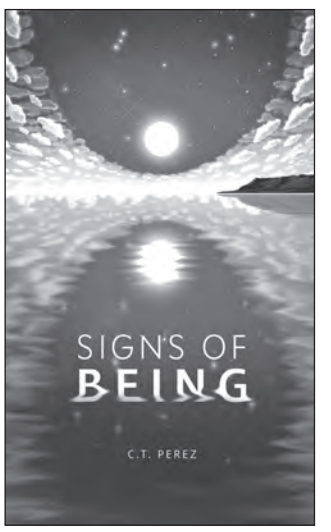
Perez has appeared in "Indigenous Literatures from Micronesia, Indigenous Women: The Right to a Voice" among other collections and is considered by many a foregrounding voice in CHamoru *famalao'an* (women) poetry.

"Signs of Being" is the second and final title published through UOG Press's Famalao'an Poets Project that seeks to amplify and celebrate poetry written by CHamoru women.

The project is made possible through the support of an Equity in Verse grant awarded to the Press by the Poetry Foundation, an independent literary organization that is committed to the increasing and strengthening the presence of poetry within the United States.

UOG

Author C.T. Perez, whose debut collection "Signs of Being" explores CHamoru identity through poetry and prose.




UOG

The cover of "Signs of Being" by C.T. Perez, a poetic exploration of CHamoru cultural heritage and identity.

The book launch will be held at the Guam Museum on Friday, Dec. 13, 2024, from 5:30pm to 7:30pm. The event is open to the public and will include a poetry reading by the author, interactive displays, and free refreshments.

"Signs of Being" is available for pre-order online at uogpress.com, nyupress.org, and Amazon, and in-store at UOG Press for $20. The book will be made available at local bookstores following the launch.

For more information, contact UOG Press Publicist Via De Fant at defantv@triton.uog.edu or +1 (671) 735-2153.

The University of Guam Press publishes an array of academic and literary books and journals with a specific focus on the unique history, environment, peoples, cultures, and languages of the islands that make up the Western Pacific region. Visit uogpress.com to learn more about them and browse their wide selection of local art and literature. ***(PR)***

# Rev & Tax to host W-2CM workshop on Dec. 17

The Division of Revenue and Taxation is inviting tax preparers and interested taxpayers to the annual W-2CM workshop on Dec. 17 at the Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe.

Every employer engaged in a trade or business who pays remuneration for the year (all amounts if any income, social security, or Medicare tax was withheld) for services performed by an employee must file a Form W-2CM for each employee (even if the employee is related to the employer) from whom:

- Income, Social Security, or Medicare tax were withheld.
- Income tax would have been withheld if the employee had claimed no more than one withholding allowance or had not claimed exemption from withholding on Form W-4, Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate.

DRT will outline the steps of preparation (i.e EWR, W-2CM, and OS-3710), deadlines, penalties, amendments, and common errors encountered.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

The Division of Revenue & Taxation office in Dandan.

The Department of Labor will be joining the workshop to speak on the importance of correctly and accurately filling out boxes C through F on W-2CM—citizenship, NAICS, SOC, and visa.

The W-2CM workshop is highly informative and gives tax professionals and business owners an opportunity to raise concerns directly with the Division of Revenue and Taxation. There will be two sessions available: morning, 8:30am-11:30am and afternoon, 1pm-4pm. Registration for either session is required via finance.gov.mp or by clicking on this link https://forms.office.com/g/msc0hwkH3y.

For more information on this W-2CM workshop, contact DRT at (670) 664-1098 or revtaxinfo@dof.gov.mp. ***(PR)***

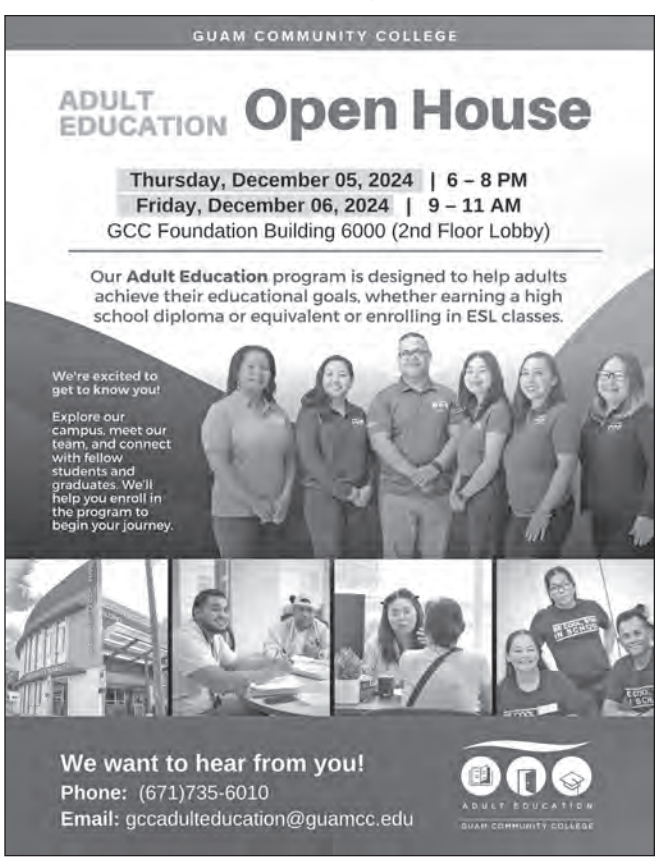
# GCC Adult Education to host 2-day open house

The public is invited to the Guam Community College Adult Education open house on Thursday, Dec. 5, from 6pm to 8pm and Friday, Dec. 6, from 9am to 11am at the 2nd Floor Lobby of the GCC Foundation Building #6000 on the Mangilao campus.

The open house will provide information and assistance to anyone looking to finish their high school education, take an English-As-A-Second Language course, or gain Integrated Education and Training such as providing excellent customer service in the hospitality industry or gaining more employable skills.

GCC's Spring 2025 registration is open at this time and the Adult Education team will gladly assist those looking to get started as soon as January 2025.

For more information on the Adult Education Program call (671) 735-5641 extension 5415 or email gccadulteducation@guamcc.edu. ***(PR)***


GUAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ADULT EDUCATION Open House
Thursday, December 05, 2024 | 6 – 8 PM
Friday, December 06, 2024 | 9 – 11 AM
GCC Foundation Building 6000 (2nd Floor Lobby)
Our Adult Education program is designed to help adults achieve their educational goals, whether earning a high school diploma or equivalent or enrolling in ESL classes.
We're excited to get to know you!
Explore our campus, meet our team, and connect with fellow students and graduates. We'll help you enroll in the program to begin your journey.
We want to hear from you!
Phone: (671)735-6010
Email: gccadulteducation@guamcc.edu
ADULT EDUCATION
GUAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION**
Office of the Executive Director

**INVITATION FOR BIDS**
**CUC-IFB-25-003**

**CONSTRUCTION OF AS MATUIS TEMPORARY TANK**

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the construction of **a temporary water tank in As Matuis.**

The project consists of a temporary water tank in As Matuis with the furnishing of all labor, supervision, equipment and materials for a new temporary fiberglass tank located in As Matuis. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the water system. CUC requires the Project to be completed in Two Hundred Seventy (270) calendar days from date of award of contract.

***The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.***

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **November 26, 2024 at 1:00 PM (CHST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

**One (1) original and Five (5) hardcopies of the bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-25-003, Construction of As Matuis Temporary Tank"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (CHST) on December 19, 2024,** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time.

Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (CHST) on December 3, 2024** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address, manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Marcela Tenorio, P&S, Senior Administrative Technician at marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and to waive any defects in said bid, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

KEVIN O. WATSON
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

# Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIV, Issue No. 240

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

**Mark Rabago** EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

## EDITORIAL

# 'Pro-democracy' Democrats eager to obstruct democracy

Prominent Democrats spent the run-up to the November election professing their desire to protect "democracy." Court documents reveal that was a cynical sham.

On Sunday, The Washington Post featured a report on the lengths that Democratic operatives went to keep a potential No Labels third-party candidate off of state presidential ballots. No Labels describes itself as a movement of people "from both parties and no party who reject extremism, embrace common sense and believe America only works when we work together."

Throughout early 2024, group officials insisted they were serious about running a top-of-the-ticket candidate in an effort to attract voters who were frustrated by the prospect of choosing between Donald Trump and Joe Biden. Democrats were terrified that adding such an option to the ballot would jeopardize their election chances.

But facing financial and other roadblocks, No Labels shelved that effort in April, two months before Biden's disastrous debate performance forced him to eventually give way to Kamala Harris.

Now No Labels is fighting back in court, filing lawsuits accusing Democrats of an "unlawful conspiracy" to stop the potential third party from entering the fray. "Documents already unsealed by the courts," the Post reported, "reveal remarkable details about private proposals for a wide range of hard-nosed tactics that would go beyond public efforts like ads, op-eds and meetings to discourage the No Labels campaign."

One email from Democratic strategist Lucy Caldwell made clear that the party was willing to go to extremes to prevent American voters from having a No Labels option. "Our main focus," she wrote, according to the Post, "should be brand destruction but, where possible, we also need to throw up any and all roadblocks to stop them from being successful at signature-gathering."

There were even plans, the Post report found, to launch a personal harassment and smear campaign against No Labels officials in an effort to "personally stigmatize" them. Another Democratic operative proposed planting negative news stories with friendly media outlets intended to disparage the group. "The goal is to poison the well for No Labels with their key stakeholders and destabilize their efforts internally and in the minds of the public," an email said. "Spread fear, uncertainty, and doubt about their operation, and within their operation."

Politics is for the grown-up table and scorched-earth tactics aren't uncommon. But for those claiming to be dedicated stewards to democracy, embracing underhanded tactics to keep voters from having more choices at the ballot box is the epitome of hypocrisy. Clearly, many progressive activists have nothing but contempt for the concept.

©2024 Las Vegas Review-Journal

Do not counterattack on Israel! They had a right to respond to your attack on them!
Wait! Don't send it to Israel! Send it to the United States!
U.S.A.
IRAN
©2024 GAMBLE KINGFEATURES SYNDICATE

# Trump's billionaire budget-cutters are dangerously out of touch

**By LZ GRANDERSON**
Los Angeles Times

*LZ Granderson is an Op-Ed columnist for the* Los Angeles Times.

A week before Halloween, during a virtual town hall event, Elon Musk told the audience "we have to reduce spending to live within our means." He said this would involve "some temporary hardship, but it will ensure long-term prosperity." Less than two weeks later, the world's 10 richest people got $64 billion richer, with Musk collecting more than 40% of that.

I'm not hating on the player, just pointing out the game.

Both he and Vivek Ramaswamy, whose net worth is estimated to be near $1 billion, will lead Donald Trump's efforts to cut trillions from federal spending. I'm all for getting our spending under control, and I'm also for tax cuts. I just wonder if the top 0.01% have any idea what "temporary hardship" translates to for the 78% of Americans already living paycheck-to-paycheck.

Take, for instance, the picture of Musk joining members of Trump's inner circle for some McDonald's. For most of them, fast food is a change of pace. But for a lot of poor people, it's what they can afford.

From the perspective of a business owner, if many Americans can't afford a healthy meal, that's a "you problem." However, in government, there are no "you problems"—only "our." And we've got a lot of them.

There are an estimated 82 million Americans with preexisting conditions who have employer-based health insurance. You might think of cancer survivors or people living with a chronic disease such as diabetes or HIV. What if I told you obesity is a protected preexisting condition under the Affordable Care Act? What if I told you that by 2050 as many as 260 million Americans are projected to be overweight or obese? What if I told you that before that 2010 healthcare law, insurance companies could charge more to obese or overweight people? Or deny coverage altogether?

It was a real problem. And it would be again, immediately, if the Affordable Care Act were dismantled as Republicans hope. As of 2021, the U.S. already had 172 million adults who are obese or overweight.

The phrase "temporary hardships" hits different when that may include losing protections for preexisting conditions, doesn't it? And remember: The people making the cuts aren't living paycheck to paycheck or worried about losing their health insurance.

So yeah, it's cool that Trump and Musk eat McDonald's like regular Americans. However, they are far from being regular Americans.

It's no coincidence that many of the 10 fattest states in the country are also among the poorest. Six states — West Virginia, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Tennessee—currently have around a 40% obesity rate and high childhood poverty rates. When those trillions in cuts come, will Trump remember that many of his voters need the federal government to help with healthcare because their states are too poor to do it on their own?

What will "temporary hardship" look like then?

One of the ways the country clawed out of the Great Depression was through the introduction of the U.S. Savings Bond program. By encouraging investing in America, the programs stemming from the New Deal not only had a source of revenue, but also stakeholders.

That was 1935.

Fast-forward 90 years, and we have the incoming Trump administration's "Project 2025," which promises a different relationship between the federal government and hurting Americans.

Musk and Ramaswamy are right that cuts are needed. They should be found by closing up tax loopholes and ending other corporate welfare, not by cutting the help given to the poor and the middle class.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt understood this, which is why he encouraged Americans to invest in each other—and those safety nets have kept us whole for nearly a century. We don't look so whole anymore: Today the poorest and unhealthiest states all voted for Trump. The richest and healthiest states did not.

Guess which group will suffer most when safety nets are slashed.

Sure, Musk knows how to make himself rich. But does he know what "temporary hardship" would mean for most Americans? To the ones who eat fast food not for a photo op, but because that's all they can afford?

**EDITORIAL POLICY** Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

# Truth 73: Adios *Tribune* and a Democrat's message to Democrats and voters!

**By AMBROSE M. BENNETT**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

*Ambrose M. Bennett is an economist who minored in sociology, political scientist, a retired teacher, and former CNMI Board of Education member, a James Madison Fellow (U.S. constitutional scholar), a Fulbright-Hays and lifetime humanities scholar who resides in Kagman III in the CNMI.*

The truth of the matter is we owe the *Tribune* a great deal of appreciation for their years of public service and that they will be missed—thanks and adios! But the acting Democrat Party chair is right on the need for the 2026, efforts of the party to begin now, as the race to win in the political arena is marathon that requires a full team effort, which has been the fatal flaw for our Democrat Party. For too long the Dems have left it up to the party chair to lead, but in Political Science 1 will learn that the highest elected person(s) in the party is viewed as the leader(s). Just look at how Trump took control of the RNC and the party and won against all the odds. I know some Democrats will complain about me exposing the Dems' mistake, but I know from experience that my admonishments on the website don't carry any weight and even complained about—no self-support in the party. But I pray this will be received as genuine constructive criticism to help the party, especially for those who aspire to be governor one day. As I told the party in the beginning when Tina was running that it is all-important to have a full slate (full-team) if the Democrats are to capture the governor's office, as this will solidify promotional and voting efforts in every precinct.

FYI Democrats, I witnessed firsthand how Ralph secretly stole the Republican Party from then governor Babauta, which he did by organizing his team. In fact, it is well known that Ralph was the biggest recruiter for the party candidates, and I know for a fact about two Ppople in his administration he asked to run but they said they were going to run as Democrats, so they were fired—true story! Not that Democrats should use the strong-arm methods that Ralph used to recruit, but indeed it is time for the top elected Democrat officials (senators) and/or those wanting to run for governor to start creating their team (a full slate of candidates) and stop putting it all on the chair. Your power as an elected Democrat is far more powerful and respected than the chair with recruitment, as creating a real team is the key to becoming governor. The Republicans have proved their recruitment methodology and the destruction of the Democrats recruiting works, which is how they have won for the past 30 straight years—it's really now on Democrat-senators who want to be governor to make sure the Democrats have a complete team, for true!

I was the first to start pleading with the then independents to join the Democrats, which they did and truly made the party stronger, but it wasn't enough with a shorthanded team. I can remember pushing for the early selection of candidates on the committee to select candidates when Tina ran for governor but there was a Republican operative within our committee (you know who) who actually stopped the early selection. There is also the big-tent phenomenon that the Republicans project as they gang up and support each other but I can't get a Democrat to even give me a thumbs up, as internal party support is lagging and even absent in some cases. It doesn't bother me but it sends a message that the Democrats are not united nor serious, which needs to change first and foremost for the people to have real confidence in the party. Just check out the comments after this for yourself that will be a bombardment of GOP character assassination attempts, as I would be shocked to see if Democrats weigh in at all.

And please don't self-destruct fighting among yourselves over who is going to run for governor, as all of you are young having time on your side, as patience and waiting for your time is a key variable to winning in the political arena, as timing is everything—flip a coin and accept the results if necessary. Stop taking politics personal, as if you are a Democrat and can't accept and respect constructive criticism from a person who was born a Democrat, lived 73 years as a Democrat, and will die a Democrat, then maybe you are in the wrong party. I am not spitting on the party but trying to wake up the party to see it win for the people who have suffered enough the pass 30 years under Republicans! I pray for the sake of the CNMI that this advice will not fall on deaf ears and will help the Democrats in getting their act together now, as we need you and it's too late once election season arrives because most of the race has already been run by then and Democrats will be playing catch-up again, the advice of a real political scientist. One people, one direction and thanks *Tribune*!

# Trump's Cabinet picks look like revenge of the bros

**By ROBIN ABCARIAN**
Los Angeles Times

I guess if millions of American voters can put a man famous for bragging about sexual assault back into the White House, it's too much to expect his Cabinet appointments to be held to a higher standard.

It seems like an eternity, but it was only seven years ago that the #MeToo movement exploded. Supercharged by revelations about Harvey Weinstein's one-man reign of sexual terror, the moment seemed to signal a permanent change in the way society treats men who harass and assault their colleagues and subordinates.

So many "important" men were pushed from their lofty perches that it would take this entire column to name them all. The sheer number of men on the left and right who considered it their birthright to demean and assault women still shocks the conscience. It seemed that we'd come to a consensus as a society that men who cross boundaries of decency should pay a hefty price, even losing jobs, no matter their political affiliations.

Why is it, then, that credibly accused sex offenders or harassers are being considered for some of the most important jobs in the country, if not the world?

It's bad enough that men such as Elon Musk, Matt Gaetz, Pete Hegseth and Robert F. Kennedy Jr. are believed by so many people to be unqualified for the jobs President-elect Donald Trump wants them to do. Worse yet, they have all been accused of sexual misconduct.

Gaetz, who withdrew his name from consideration as attorney general under pressure last week, has been investigated by the Department of Justice and the House Ethics Committee for alleged criminal behavior that includes sex trafficking involving underage girls. He denies any wrongdoing and has not been charged with a crime, although his buddy Joel Greenberg is serving an 11-year prison term after pleading guilty to, among other crimes, sex trafficking a minor, stalking, wire fraud and identity theft.

Hegseth, the Fox News star who has been nominated for defense secretary, paid off a woman who accused him of raping her in a Monterey hotel room in 2017. Last week, Monterey police released a 22-page report on the alleged assault, which did not lead to criminal charges and which Hegseth denies. But it did lead to a settlement and nondisclosure agreement.

Kennedy, the anti-vaxxer nominated to lead the Department of Health and Human Services, was accused this year of groping and harassing a young woman who worked for him as a live-in babysitter in 1999. After she went public, Kennedy texted her that he had no memory of the events she described. "I apologize sincerely for anything I ever did that made you feel uncomfortable or anything I did or said that offended you or hurt your feelings," he wrote.

Musk, whom Trump has put in charge of streamlining the federal government, is the defendant in a lawsuit filed by eight former SpaceX employees who claim they were fired in retaliation for raising concerns about sexual harassment and discrimination at the company. The Insider reported that SpaceX paid a flight attendant $250,000 in 2018 to settle a sexual misconduct claim after she accused him of exposing himself to her and offering to buy her a horse in exchange for an erotic massage. He has denied the accusations.

We're at a point in our history when men behaving badly toward women is not just excused but accepted and, it seems to me, even prized in certain circles. Call it the revenge of the bros.

A Pew Research Center study this year found that nearly 40% of young adults ages 18 to 29 say they get their news from online influencers, who are overwhelmingly male and lean right. And 65% of those who get their news from influencers say it helps shape their understanding of news and politics. That's especially scary when you think of how many Trump-friendly men, like Joe Rogan, Theo Von, Adin Ross and Andrew Schulz, have millions of followers.

I am not going to argue that journalists are more likely than podcasters to hold politicians' feet to the fire when they lie, because I shouldn't have to. You know they are. And it's why politicians would always rather be interviewed by a popular podcaster than a network or cable news anchor.

In fact, Bloomberg described Rogan's interviews in general—and specifically with Trump, who spent three hours on Rogan's program in the waning days of the presidential campaign—as "chummy, digressive, conspiratorial, adulatory and rarely oppositional."

On the podcast, Trump spewed his usual lies about the 2020 election, immigration, foreign policy, Vice President Kamala Harris—at least 32 false claims by CNN's estimate—and was basically slobbered over by Rogan.

"I liked how you called them 'little rocket man'" was a typically incisive Rogan comment, in response to Trump talking about his close relationship with North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un.

Happily, the rise of the "your body, my choice" bro culture does not sit well with many young women.

The San Francisco-based polling firm Change Research found that young American voters have a larger gender gap than any other generation. In 2023, the firm found that more than half of millennial and Gen Z women reported that they would consider it a red flag if their male partner listened to Rogan. Other red flags included a male partner saying there are only two genders or using the phrase "All lives matter."

And maybe those of us who are disgusted that the Trump administration is shaping up as a haven for men who mistreat women will take some solace in this: The vast majority of young women—76%—said it was a red flag if a male partner identified as a MAGA Republican.

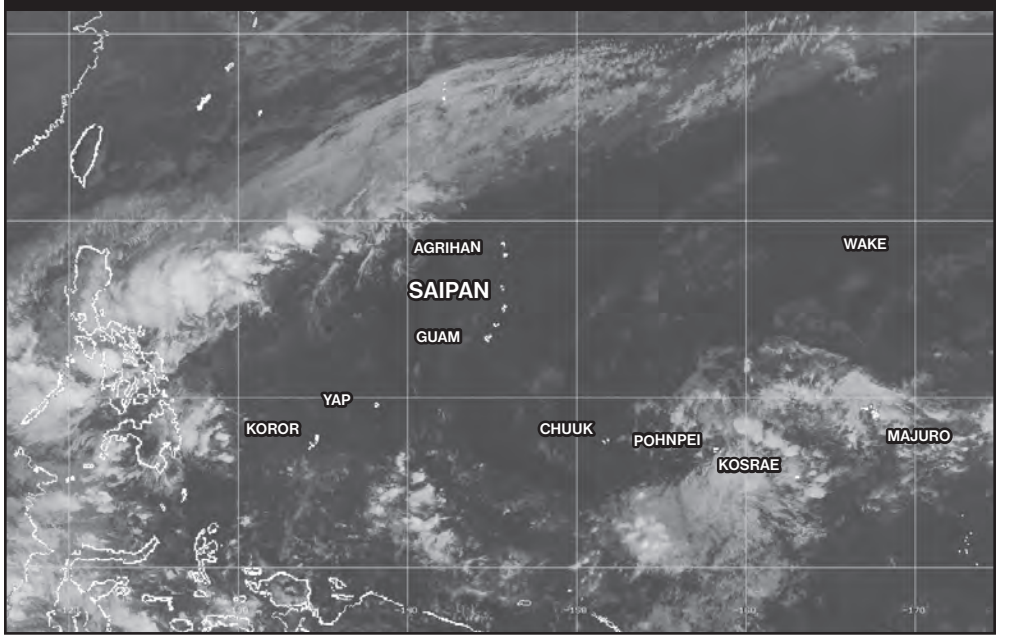
I hate to put the burden on young women, but sisters rising up against sexism could save us yet.

# The Weather

## 5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

| TODAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Partly cloudy. Isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph. | Mostly cloudy. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. East winds 15 to 20 mph. | Mostly cloudy. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. East winds 15 to 20 mph. | Partly cloudy with a 10 percent chance of showers. Breezy Monday. | Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of showers. Slight chance of thunderstorms. |
| 87° 77° | 87° 78° | 87° 78° | 87° 79° | 87° 79° |

## YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE




**PICTURE TIME: 5:59 AM SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2024**

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

The weather and marine forecasts remain largely unchanged. Introduced an even lesser shower potential for tonight, as drier, diffusive trade wind flow is expected to dominate overnight.

*Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/*

| MICRONESIA | | ▲ ▼ °F |
|---|---|---|
| Guam and Rota | Partly Cloudy | 86° / 79° |
| Palau | Partly Cloudy | 85° / 78° |
| Yap | Partly Cloudy | 86° / 79° |
| Chuuk | Mostly Cloudy | 86° / 80° |
| Pohnpei | Mostly Cloudy | 85° / 78° |
| Kosrae | Partly Cloudy | 85° / 78° |
| Majuro | Partly Cloudy | 85° / 80° |

| DAY | SUNRISE | SUNSET |
|---|---|---|
| Today | 6:27 AM | 5:44 PM |
| Tuesday | 6:28 AM | 5:45 PM |
| Wednesday | 6:28 AM | 5:45 PM |
| Thursday | 6:29 AM | 5:45 PM |
| Friday | 6:30 AM | 5:45 PM |

| DAY | MOONRISE | MOONSET | MOONRISE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Today | 7:07 AM | 6:25 PM | - |
| Tuesday | 8:04 AM | 7:21 PM | - |
| Wednesday | 9:00 AM | 8:20 PM | - |
| Thursday | 9:52 AM | 9:19 PM | - |
| Friday | 10:40 AM | 10:17 PM | - |

| AROUND THE GLOBE | | ▲ ▼ °F |
|---|---|---|
| Auckland | Mostly Sunny | 72° / 59° |
| Beijing | Sunny | 45° / 21° |
| Hong Kong | Partly Cloudy | 73° / 63° |
| Honolulu | Showers | 82° / 73° |
| London | Sunny | 43° / 34° |
| Los Angeles | Sunny | 73° / 53° |
| Manila | Partly Cloudy | 90° / 77° |
| Melbourne | Rain | 66° / 55° |
| Miami | Mostly Sunny | 78° / 71° |
| New York | Showers | 53° / 36° |
| Osaka | Sunny | 52° / 39° |
| Paris | Partly Cloudy | 39° / 28° |
| Busan | Mostly Sunny | 48° / 36° |
| Rome | Mostly Sunny | 55° / 39° |
| Salem | Partly Cloudy | 70° / 54° |
| San Francisco | Partly Cloudy | 59° / 48° |
| Seoul | Mostly Sunny | 45° / 32° |
| Tokyo | Mostly Sunny | 50° / 39° |
| Washington, DC | Partly Cloudy | 54° / 34° |

| TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY | | FEET |
|---|---|---|
| 2:03 AM | Low Tide | -0.51 |
| 9:21 AM | High Tide | 1.68 |
| 2:35 PM | Low Tide | 1.16 |
| 7:08 PM | High Tide | 1.63 |

**NEWS DESK** For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

**CUSTOMER SERVICE** For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

**SUBSCRIPTION** Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

**ADVERTISING** For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 1, 2024

### DEPARTURES

**SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA076 | 9:50AM | 10:35AM | Daily |

**SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA824 | 1:20PM | 4:00PM | 1, 3, 5 |

**GUAM-MANILA (MNL)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| PR 111 | 5:55AM | 7:55AM | Daily |
| UA183 | 7:55PM | 9:50PM | Daily |
| UA193 | 7:55PM | 11:50PM | 2, 5 via Palau |

**SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7C3218/2305 | 2:45AM | 10:20PM | Daily via Incheon |
| UA076/183 Guam | 9:50AM | 9:50PM | Daily via |
| UA076/193 | 9:50AM | 11:50PM | 2, 5 via Guam, Palau |

**SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| TW308 | 2:30AM | 6:25AM | Daily |
| 7C3218 | 2:45AM | 6:45AM | Daily from Dec 8 |
| 7C3212 | 4:35PM | 8:25PM | Daily |

**SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7C3552 | 3:55AM | 7:20AM | 3, 6 from Dec 25 |

**SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| HX77 | 3:05AM | 5:55AM | 1, 5 |

### ARRIVALS

**GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA174 | 8:00AM | 8:45AM | Daily |

**NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA825 | 5:30PM | 10:05PM | 2, 4, 7 |

**MANILA (MNL)-GUAM**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA156 | 00:40AM | 6:25AM | 3, 6 |
| PR110 | 10:05PM | 3:55AM+1 | Daily |
| UA192 | 10:40PM | 6:30AM+1 | 2, 5 via Palau |
| UA184 | 10:55PM | 4:40AM+1 | 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 |

**MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA156 | 00:40AM | 8:45AM | 3, 6 via Guam |
| UA192/174 | 10:40PM | 8:45AM+1 | 2, 5 via Palau, Guam |
| UA184/174 | 10:55PM | 8:45AM +1 | 1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam |
| 7C2306/3407 | 11:20PM | 3:30PM+1 | Daily |

**INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7C3211 | 10:10AM | 3:30PM | Daily |
| TW307 | 8:00PM | 1:30AM+1 | Daily |
| 7C3217 | 8:10PM | 1:40AM+1 | Daily from Dec 8 |

**BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7C3551 | 9:25PM | 2:50AM+1 | 2, 5 from Dec 25 |

**HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| HX76 | 6:25PM | 1:35AM+1 | 4, 7 |

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

## STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024

**SAIPAN TO ROTA**

| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1301 | SAIPAN | ROTA | 08:30 | 09:00 | Daily |
| 1302 | SAIPAN | ROTA | 10:30 | 11:00 | Daily |
| 1303 | SAIPAN | ROTA | 15:30 | 16:00 | Daily |

**ROTA TO SAIPAN**

| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3101 | ROTA | SAIPAN | 9:30 | 10:00 | Daily |
| 3102 | ROTA | SAIPAN | 11:30 | 12:00 | Saturday & Sunday |
| 3103 | ROTA | SAIPAN | 13:30 | 14:00 | Monday To Friday |
| 3104 | ROTA | SAIPAN | 16:30 | 17:00 | Daily |

**ROTA TO GUAM**

| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3401 | ROTA | GUAM | 11:30 | 12:00 | Monday To Friday |

**GUAM TO ROTA**

| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4301 | GUAM | ROTA | 12:30 | 13:00 | Monday To Friday |

**SAIPAN TO TINIAN**

| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1201 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 7:30 | 7:45 | Daily |
| 1202 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 8:00 | 8:15 | Daily |
| 1203 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 9:00 | 9:15 | Daily |
| 1204 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 10:00 | 10:15 | Daily |
| 1206 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 14:00 | 14:15 | Daily |
| 1207 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 15:00 | 15:15 | Daily |
| 1208 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 16:00 | 16:15 | Daily |
| 1209 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 17:00 | 17:15 | Daily |

**TINIAN TO SAIPAN**

| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2101 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 8:00 | 8:15 | Daily |
| 2102 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 8:30 | 8:45 | Daily |
| 2103 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 9:30 | 9:45 | Daily |
| 2104 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 10:30 | 10:45 | Daily |
| 2106 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 14:30 | 14:45 | Daily |
| 2107 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 15:30 | 15:45 | Daily |
| 2108 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 16:30 | 16:45 | Daily |
| 2109 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 17:30 | 17:45 | Daily |

# Business

IF THEY ACT TO UNDERMINE US DOLLAR

## Trump threatens 100% tariff on BRIC bloc of nations

**WEST PALM BEACH, Fla.** (AP)—President-elect Donald Trump on Saturday threatened 100% tariffs against a bloc of nine nations if they act to undermine the U.S. dollar.

His threat was directed at countries in the so-called BRIC alliance, which consists of Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates.

Turkey, Azerbaijan and Malaysia have applied to become members and several other countries have expressed interest in joining.

While the U.S. dollar is by far the most-used currency in global business and has survived past challenges to its preeminence, members of the alliance and other developing nations say they are fed up with America's dominance of the global financial system.

The dollar represents roughly 58% of the world's foreign exchange reserves, according to the IMF and major commodities like oil are still primarily bought and sold using dollars. The dollar's dominance is threatened, however, with BRICS' growing share of GDP and the alliance's intent to trade in non-dollar currencies—a process known as de-dollarization.

Trump, in a Truth Social post, said: "We require a commitment from these Countries that they will neither create a new BRICS Currency, nor back any other Currency to replace the mighty U.S. Dollar or, they will face 100% Tariffs, and should expect to say goodbye to selling into the wonderful U.S. Economy."

AP
President-elect Donald Trump speaks during a meeting with the House GOP conference, Nov. 13, 2024, in Washington.

At a summit of BRIC nations in October, Russian President Vladimir Putin accused the U.S. of "weaponizing" the dollar and described it as a "big mistake."

"It's not us who refuse to use the dollar," Putin said at the time. "But if they don't let us work, what can we do? We are forced to search for alternatives."

Russia has specifically pushed for the creation of a new payment system that would offer an alternative to the global bank messaging network, SWIFT, and allow Moscow to dodge Western sanctions and trade with partners.

Trump said there is "no chance" BRIC will replace the U.S. dollar in global trade and any country that tries to make that happen "should wave goodbye to America."

Research shows that the U.S. dollar's role as the primary global reserve currency is not threatened in the near future.

An Atlantic Council model that assesses the dollar's place as the primary global reserve currency states the dollar is "secure in the near and medium term" and continues to dominate other currencies.

Trump's latest tariff threat comes after he threatened to slap 25% tariffs on everything imported from Mexico and Canada, and an additional 10% tax on goods from China, as a way to force the countries to do more to halt the flow of illegal immigration and drugs into the U.S.

He has since held a call with Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum, who said Thursday she is confident that a tariff war with the United States can be averted. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau returned home Saturday after meeting Trump, without assurances the president-elect will back away from threatened tariffs on Canada.

## Trump, GOP in Congress eye ambitious 100-day agenda, starting with tax cuts

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—A tax break for millionaires, and almost everyone else.

An end to the COVID-19-era government subsidies that some Americans have used to purchase health insurance.

Limits to food stamps, including for women and children, and other safety net programs. Rollbacks to Biden-era green energy programs. Mass deportations. Government job cuts to "drain the swamp."

Having won the election and sweeping to power, Republicans are planning an ambitious 100-day agenda with President-elect Donald Trump in the White House and GOP lawmakers in a congressional majority to accomplish their policy goals.

Atop the list is the plan to renew some $4 trillion in expiring GOP tax cuts, a signature domestic achievement of Trump's first term and an issue that may define his return to the White House.

"What we're focused on right now is being ready, Day 1," said House Majority Leader Steve Scalise, R-La., after meeting recently with GOP colleagues to map out the road ahead.

The policies emerging will revive long-running debates about America's priorities, its gaping income inequities and the proper size and scope of its government, especially in the face of mounting federal deficits now approaching $2 trillion a year.

The discussions will test whether Trump and his Republican allies can achieve the kinds of real-world outcomes wanted, needed or supported when voters gave the party control of Congress and the White House.

"The past is really prologue here," said Lindsay Owens, executive director of the Groundwork Collaborative, recalling the 2017 tax debate.

Trump's first term became defined by those tax cuts, which were approved by Republicans in Congress and signed into law only after their initial campaign promise to "repeal and replace" Democratic President Barack Obama's health care law sputtered, failing with the famous thumbs-down vote by then-Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz.

The GOP majority in Congress quickly pivoted to tax cuts, assembling and approving the multitrillion-dollar package by year's end.

In the time since Trump signed those cuts into law, the big benefits have accrued to higher-income households. The top 1 percent—those making nearly $1 million and above—received about a $60,000 income tax cut, while those with lower incomes got as little as a few hundred dollars, according to the Tax Policy Center and other groups. Some people ended up paying about the same.

"The big economic story in the U.S. is soaring income inequality," said Owens. "And that is actually, interestingly, a tax story."

In preparation for Trump's return, Republicans in Congress have been meeting privately for months and with the president-elect to go over proposals to extend and enhance those tax breaks, some of which would otherwise expire in 2025.

That means keeping in place various tax brackets and a standardized deduction for individual earners, along with the existing rates for so-called pass-through entities such as law firms, doctors' offices or businesses that take their earnings as individual income.

Typically, the price tag for the tax cuts would be prohibitive. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that keeping the expiring provisions in place would add some $4 trillion to deficits over a decade.

Adding to that, Trump wants to include his own priorities in the tax package, including lowering the corporate rate, now at 21% from the 2017 law, to 15%, and doing away with individual taxes on tips and overtime pay.

But Avik Roy, president of the Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity, said blaming the tax cuts for the nation's income inequality is "just nonsense" because tax filers up and down the income ladder benefited. He instead points to other factors, including the Federal Reserve's historically low interest rates that enable borrowing, including for the wealthy, on the cheap.

## King-Hinds guest at Chamber Dec. general membership meeting

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will feature CNMI delegate-elect Kimberlyn King-Hinds during its December general membership meeting scheduled for this Wednesday, Dec. 4, from 11:30am to 1pm at Taga Hall of World Resort Saipan.

King-Hinds will share her congressional goals and priorities once in office. She will also open the floor to give members the opportunity to provide feedback on the business community, the challenges they are currently facing, and how she can assist them at the congressional level.

Aside from King-Hinds' presentation this general membership meeting, Chamber members will also receive important updates from the Chamber's committee chairs about recent activities and progress. Additionally, Chamber announcements will also be made informing members on upcoming events and what to expect in 2025.

Your registration includes a delicious lunch, valuable networking opportunities, and the chance to participate in insightful discussions on key developments in the community. To register, RSVP by visiting: https://tinyurl.com/SCCDEC-GMM, or contact our office at (670) 234-7150 or via email at contactus@saipanchamber.org for registration assistance.

The registration fee is $35 for Chamber members and $40 for future members, which includes a delicious lunch, valuable networking opportunities, and fruitful discussions.

"Don't miss out on this chance to stay informed, share ideas, and strengthen your connections with other business professionals. We look forward to seeing you there!" the Chamber said.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization with approximately 131 members dedicated to promoting the economic growth and development of the CNMI. The Chamber serves as the collective voice of the business community, advocating for their interests, fostering collaboration, and driving initiatives that support the local economy. ***(PR)***

# World

## Zelenskyy says NATO offer for Ukraine-controlled territory could end 'hot stage' of war

**KYIV, Ukraine** (AP)—An offer of NATO membership to territory under Kyiv's control would end "the hot stage of the war" in Ukraine, but any proposal to join the military alliance should be extended to all parts of the country that fall under internationally recognized borders, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a broadcast interview.

Zelenskyy's remarks on Friday signaled a possible way forward to the difficult path Ukraine faces to future NATO membership. At their summit in Washington in July, the 32 members declared Ukraine on an "irreversible" path to membership.

However, one obstacle to moving forward has been the view that Ukraine's borders would need to be clearly demarcated before it could join so that there can be no mistaking where the alliance's pact of mutual defense would come into effect.

"You can't give an invitation to just one part of a country," Zelenskyy said in an excerpt of the interview with Sky News. "Why? Because thus you would recognize that Ukraine is only that territory of Ukraine and the other one is Russia."

Under the Ukrainian Constitution, Ukraine can't recognize territory occupied by Russia as Russian.

"So legally, by law, we have no right to recognize the occupied territory as territory of Russia," he said.

AP

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy speaks to journalists during a press conference at an EU summit in Brussels, Thursday, Oct. 17, 2024.

Since the start of the war in 2022, Russia has been expending huge amounts of weaponry and human life to make small-but-steady territorial gains to the nearly one-fifth of Ukraine it already controls in east and southern Ukraine.

"If we want to stop the hot stage of the war, we should take under the NATO umbrella the territory of Ukraine that we have under our control. That's what we need to do, fast. And then Ukraine can get back the other part of its territory diplomatically," he said.

An invitation for Ukraine to join NATO is one key point of Zelenskyy's "victory plan," which he presented to Western allies and the Ukrainian people in October. The plan is seen as a way for Ukraine to strengthen its hand in any negotiations with Moscow.

Earlier this week, NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte said that the alliance "needs to go further" to support Ukraine in its fight against Russia's invasion. Military aid to Kyiv and steps toward ending the war are expected to be high on the agenda when NATO members' foreign ministers meet in Brussels for a two-day gathering starting on Dec. 3.

However, any decision for Ukraine to join the military alliance would require a lengthier process and the agreement of all member states.

There is also uncertainty as to the foreign policy stance of U.S. President-elect Donald Trump. While Trump vowed on the campaign trail to end Russia's invasion of Ukraine in a single day, he hasn't publicly discussed how this could happen. Trump also announced Wednesday that Keith Kellogg, an 80-year-old, highly decorated retired three-star general, would serve as his special envoy for Ukraine and Russia.

In April, Kellog wrote that "bringing the Russia-Ukraine war to a close will require strong, America First leadership to deliver a peace deal and immediately end the hostilities between the two warring parties."

Meanwhile, during his only campaign debate with U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris, Trump twice refused to directly answer a question about whether he wanted Ukraine to win the war—raising concerns that Kyiv could be forced to accept unfavorable terms in any negotiations.

Zelenskyy's statement comes as Ukraine faces increasing pressure along the 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line. In its latest report, Washington-based think tank the Institute for the Study of War said Saturday that Russian forces had recently advanced near Kupiansk, in Toretsk, and near Pokrovsk and Velyka Novosilka, a key logistics route for the Ukrainian military.

At least four people were killed Saturday when a Russian missile hit Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region, Zelenskyy said in a post on Telegram. Dnipropetrovsk Gov. Serhiy Lysak said that the strike also wounded at least 21 people, of which eight were in a serious condition.

Ukraine's air force announced Saturday that the country had come under attack from 10 Russian drones, of which eight were shot down over the Kyiv, Cherkasy, Kirovohrad, Dnipropetrovsk and Kherson regions. One drone returned to Russian-occupied territory, while the final drone disappeared from radar, often a sign of the use of electronic defenses.

Meanwhile, the Russian Defense Ministry said that 11 Ukrainian drones had been shot down by the country's air defense systems. Both the mayor of Sochi, Andrey Proshunin, and the head of Russia's Dagestan region, Sergey Melikov, both in Russia's southwest, said that drones had been destroyed in their regions overnight. No casualties were reported.

On Friday, the Ukrainian president announced a number of changes to military leadership, saying that changes in personnel management were needed to improve the situation on the battlefield.

Gen. Mykhailo Drapatyi, who led the defense of Kharkiv during Russia's new offensive on Ukraine's second-largest city this year, was appointed the new head of Ukraine's Ground Forces. Oleh Apostol was named as the new deputy commander-in-chief responsible for improving military training.

## Israelis wary of returning north because they don't trust ceasefire with Hezbollah

**KIBBUTZ MALKIYA, Israel** (AP)—Dean Sweetland casts his gaze over a forlorn street in the Israeli community of Kibbutz Malkiya. Perched on a hill overlooking the border with Lebanon, the town stands mostly empty after being abandoned a year ago.

The daycare is closed. The homes are unkempt. Parts of the landscape are ashen from fires sparked by fallen Hezbollah rockets. Even after a tenuous Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire designed to let Israelis return to the north, the mood here is far from celebratory.

"The ceasefire is rubbish," said Sweetland, a gardener and member of the kibbutz's civilian security squad. "Do you expect me to ring around my friends and say, 'All the families should come home?' No."

Across the border, Lebanese civilians have jammed roads in a rush to return to homes in the country's south, but most residents of northern Israel have met the ceasefire with suspicion and apprehension.

"Hezbollah could still come back to the border, and who will protect us when they do?" Sweetland asked.

Israel's government seeks to bring the northern reaches of the country back to life, particularly the line of communities directly abutting Lebanon that have played a major role in staking out Israel's border.

But the fear of Hezbollah, a lack of trust in United Nations peacekeeping forces charged with upholding the ceasefire, deep anger at the government and some Israelis' desire to keep rebuilding their lives elsewhere are keeping many from returning immediately.

When the truce took effect, about 45,000 Israelis had evacuated from the north. They fled their homes after Hezbollah began firing across the border on Oct. 8, 2023, in solidarity with its ally Hamas in Gaza. That triggered more than a year of cross-border exchanges, with Lebanese villages in the south and Israeli communities facing the border taking the brunt of the pain.

During the truce's initial 60-day phase, Hezbollah is supposed to remove its armed presence from a broad band of southern Lebanon where the military says the militant group had been digging in for years by gathering weapons and setting up rocket launch sites and other infrastructure. Under the ceasefire, a U.N. peacekeeping force known as UNIFIL and a beefed-up Lebanese army presence are supposed to ensure Hezbollah doesn't return.

Many residents of northern Israel are skeptical that the peace will hold.

## WORLD BRIEFS

### PH president says impeaching vice president, his rival, would be a waste of time

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said Friday that filing impeachment complaints against the vice president, who is facing a legal storm after publicly threatening to have him killed, would be a waste of time for Congress. It was unclear whether Marcos' remark would stop plans by several groups to file impeachment complaints against Duterte over a number of criminal allegations, including her alleged misuse of confidential government funds and her recent public threat to have the president, his wife and the speaker of the House of Representatives killed if she herself were killed in a plot she has not detailed. The legal troubles facing the vice president and her father, former President Rodrigo Duterte, are unfolding in the backdrop of their worsening feud with Marcos. It's the latest battle between the country's most powerful families in a long-unwieldy democracy that has been dominated for decades by political dynasties. But Marcos played down the political showdown. "It's a storm in a teacup," he told reporters. "This is not important. This will not make any difference to even one single Filipino life, so, why waste time on it?" he said of an impeachment. Impeachment complaints are being prepared for filing before the House, which is led by Marcos' cousin and political ally, Martin Romualdez. Duterte regards Romualdez as a bitter opponent. Both are seen as potential presidential candidates in 2028.

### Paraguay, one of Taiwan's 12 remaining allies, says it won't break ties in favor of China

**TAIPEI, Taiwan** (AP)—Paraguay's foreign minister said his country is committed to its relationship with Taiwan and has no plans to break off their diplomatic relationship in favor of China as he visited the increasingly isolated island Friday. Paraguay is the only country in South America and one of 12 worldwide that recognizes Taiwan as a country, but it also has a big trade relationship with China worth about $5 billion. "Paraguay is open to establish diplomatic, consular or commercial relations with China without conditions," Paraguay Foreign Minister Ruben Dario Ramirez Lezcano said. But "we don't accept any condition to break our relations with Taiwan." China has become one of the biggest players in South America, and the biggest trading partner for many countries in the region. China's trade with the region has grown exponentially, reaching nearly $500 billion as of 2023, according to data from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. "We are very committed," said Ramirez Lezcano. He added that the relationship is not dependent on the U.S. "It's not because the U.S. is asking Paraguay to keep relations with Taiwan." China requires it diplomatic allies to recognize its claim that Taiwan is a part of China. Taiwan and China split after a civil war, and today, Taiwan is self-ruled.

# Life & Style

## Buffalo Bills QB Josh Allen gets engaged to Hailee Steinfeld

**ORCHARD PARK, N.Y.** (AP) — Josh Allen's latest kneel-down had nothing to do with football.

The Buffalo Bills quarterback and actor Hailee Steinfeld posted a photo to their Instagram followers on Friday—20.3 million for Steinfeld and a mere 1.3 million for Allen—of Allen on one knee proposing marriage. The picture was taken on a grassy ridge overlooking water, with the couple surrounded by candles and framed by a large arch covered in flowers.

The NFL reposted the picture on X to congratulate the pair on their engagement, with a message ending with a ring and heart emoji.

The setting was likely somewhere on the California coastline, where Allen lives in the offseason. And the proposal likely occurred sometime last week, when the Bills had a bye.

Allen didn't reveal the engagement during his weekly news conference on Wednesday as the AFC East-leading Bills (9-2) prepare to host the San Francisco 49ers on Sunday night. But he did smile widely when asked how he enjoyed his bye week.

"Fantastic. It was great. Got some sun. Hung out with family. It was fantastic," he said.

Allen and Steinfeld were first linked in the spring of 2023, when they were photographed dining together in New York City. Months later, Allen acknowledged the two were dating, but asked The Associated Press not to mention Steinfeld by name in a bid to maintain a semblance of privacy.

AP

This combination of photos shows Hailee Steinfeld on Oct. 30, 2024, in Los Angeles, and Buffalo Bills quarterback Josh Allen on Nov. 10, 2024, in Indianapolis.

Steinfeld has since begun attending Bills home games, and the couple hosted a Halloween party this fall.

The 27-year-old Steinfeld is from Los Angeles and began her acting career at age 10. She earned an Oscar nomination for best supporting actress for her role as Mattie Ross in the Coen brothers' 2010 remake of "True Grit." She also received a Golden Globe nomination for her performance in the 2016 high school dramedy "The Edge of Seventeen." Her other credits include "Bumblebee," "Dickinson" and Marvel's "Hawkeye," along with voice roles in "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse" and its sequel.

## Magic can't save 'Harry Potter' star Rupert Grint from a $2.3M tax bill

**LONDON** (AP)—Former "Harry Potter" film actor Rupert Grint faces a 1.8 million-pound ($2.3 million) bill after he lost a legal battle with the tax authorities.

Grint, who played Ron Weasley in the magical film franchise, was ordered to pay the money in 2019 after H.M. Revenue and Customs, the U.K. tax agency, investigated his tax return from seven years earlier.

The agency said Grint had wrongly classed 4.5 million pounds in residuals from the movies—money from DVD sales, TV syndication, streaming rights and other sources—as a capital asset rather than income, which is subject to a much higher tax rate.

Lawyers for Grint appealed, but after years of wrangling a tribunal judge ruled against the actor this week. Judge Harriet Morgan said the money "derived substantially the whole of its value from the activities of Mr. Grint" and "is taxable as income."

AP

Rupert Grint poses for photographers upon arrival at the special screening of the film 'Knock at the Cabin' in London, Wednesday, Jan. 25, 2023.

Grint, 36, starred in all eight Harry Potter films between 2001 and 2011 as the boy wizard's best friend, and is calculated to have earned around 24 million pounds from the role.

He previously lost a separate court battle over a 1-million pound tax refund in 2019.

## Cryptocurrency entrepreneur who bought banana art for $6.2M eats the fruit in HK

**HONG KONG** (AP)—A cryptocurrency entrepreneur who bought a piece of conceptual art consisting of a simple banana, duct-taped to a wall, for $6.2 million last week ate the fruit in Hong Kong on Friday.

Chinese-born Justin Sun peeled off the duct tape and enjoyed the banana in a press conference held in The Peninsula Hong Kong, one of the city's priciest hotels, in the popular shopping district of Tsim Sha Tsui.

"It tastes much better than other bananas. Indeed, quite good," he said.

"Comedian," by Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan, was a phenomenon when it debuted in 2019 at Art Basel Miami Beach, as festivalgoers tried to make out whether the single yellow piece of fruit affixed to a white wall with silver duct tape was a joke or a cheeky commentary on questionable standards among art collectors. At one point, another artist took the banana off the wall and ate it.

The piece attracted so much attention that it had to be withdrawn from view. But three editions sold for between $120,000 and $150,000, according to the gallery handling sales at the time.

Last week, Sun, founder of cryptocurrency platform TRON, made the winning bid at the Sotheby's auction in New York. Or, more accurately, Sun purchased a certificate of authenticity that gives him the authority to duct-tape a banana to a wall and call it "Comedian."

At the time, Sun said in a statement that the piece "represents a cultural phenomenon that bridges the worlds of art, memes, and the cryptocurrency community."

"I will personally eat the banana as part of this unique artistic experience, honoring its place in both art history and popular culture," he said.

The South China Morning Post reported the banana he ate on Friday was bought in Hong Kong.

Sun on Tuesday announced on X he had invested $30 million in World Liberty Financial, which was launched by U.S. President-elect Donald Trump in September as his family's cryptocurrency venture.

Sun said in the post that his platform, TRON, is "committed to making America great again and leading innovation." Following his investment in Trump's venture, he became an advisor of World Liberty Financial.

Last year, Sun was charged by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission with fraud and other securities law violations. In response, he said on X the complaint "lacks merit."

## Grandparents' lack of interest disappoints first-time mom

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have a beautiful soon-to-be 2- year-old daughter. Before her birth, my parents and his all were eagerly awaiting her arrival and discussing their plans for what life as new grandparents would be. We just "knew" they would be involved so much it would drive us crazy. Instead, it's the opposite!

My parents work 40-plus hours a week and care for my 5-year-old half-brother, who was recently diagnosed with autism. Naturally, I have to cut them some slack. His parents, on the other hand, aren't workaholics. They spend their time doing things like spending a couple of weeks on the lake, taking scuba lessons and participating in a quilting club. They tell us about their fun, then ask how our daughter is. (They haven't seen her in weeks.)

I know the role of a grandparent has changed. They are getting a taste of freedom from raising children. However, they are not free child care to me. They are my FAMILY, and I wanted to see all those plans they had for her before she was born realized.

I am writing this because my parents have just announced they won't be able to get off work for her birthday party. They knew it was coming, and I know it was possible for them to plan a work around for the party. I'm heartbroken.

I feel like we are raising our daughter all alone, with no help from family. I'm angry that they are missing out on this wonderful little person and consider other things more important than their grandchild. Am I holding too high a standard for them? Is it wrong that I'm miffed at this?

ALONE IN ILLINOIS

**DEAR ALONE: Feelings are neither right nor wrong. I won't judge you for having them. But ask yourself whether your anger is useful or a detriment to your relationship with your parents and in-laws. Your parents are caring for a child with disabilities, in addition to their full-time jobs. Resenting them for not attending a 2-year-old's birthday party is a waste of your energy.**

**Your in-laws, regardless of what they said during your pregnancy, appear to be more centered on themselves than on their grandchild. Regrettable? Yes. But rather than dwell on it, accept it for what it is and move on.**

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married for 15 years. He made a resolution to go on a diet and cut out sweets. However, I have noticed that my chocolates have been going missing. We live alone, and I'm not sure whether to call him out to help keep him accountable or remain quiet in order to keep the peace.

WELL-MEANING WIFE

### DEAR ABBY

**BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

*Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.*

**DEAR WIFE: OK, so your husband took the pledge and seems to have lapsed. My question is, is he still losing weight, or has he hit a plateau? If he's losing—albeit more slowly, look the other way. If he isn't, then "casually" comment (with a smile) that your chocolates seem to be disappearing faster than you can consume them, but do NOT assume the role of the food police.**

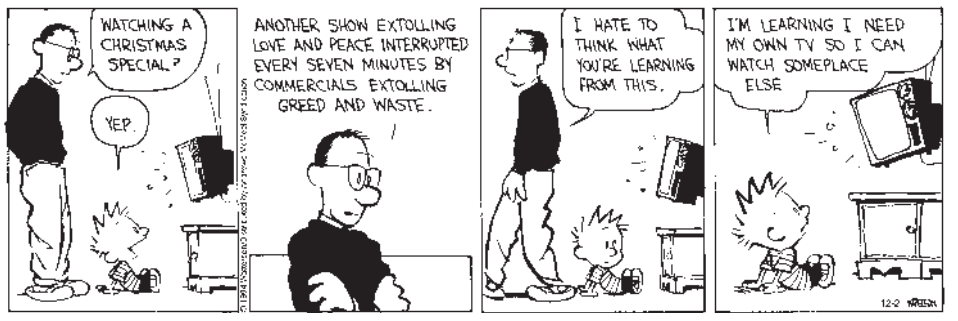
■■■

*For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)*

# Pastimes

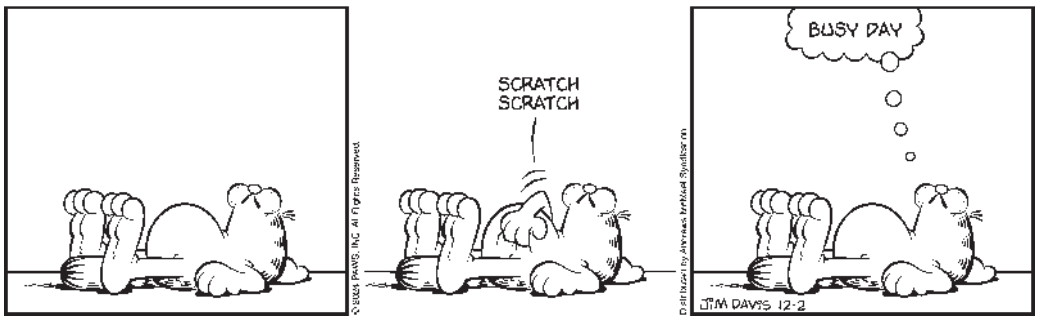
## Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WATCHING A CHRISTMAS SPECIAL?
YEP.
ANOTHER SHOW EXTOLLING LOVE AND PEACE INTERRUPTED EVERY SEVEN MINUTES BY COMMERCIALS EXTOLLING GREED AND WASTE.
I HATE TO THINK WHAT YOU'RE LEARNING FROM THIS.
I'M LEARNING I NEED MY OWN TV SO I CAN WATCH SOMEPLACE ELSE
12-2

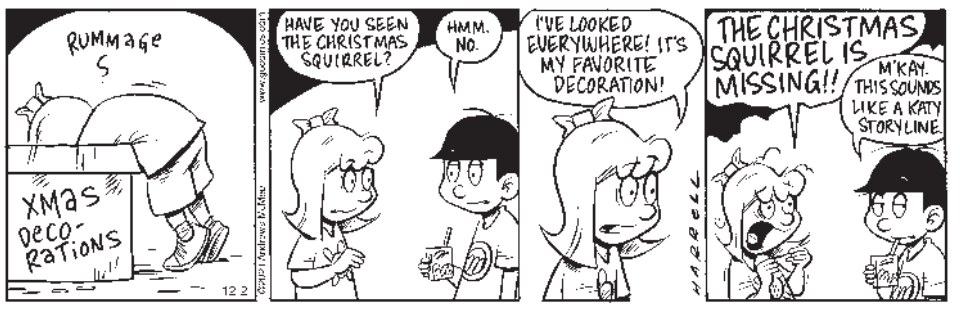
## Garfield®

By Jim Davis




## Adam@home

By Bryan Basset




## The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

WELL, IT'S A CHRISTMAS LETTER FROM MY UNCLE JACK. THE ONE WHO WORKS FOR THE CIA? WHAT DOES HE SAY?
I CAN'T TELL. IT'S HEAVILY REDACTED.

## CROSSWORD

*By Eugene Sheffer*

**ACROSS**

1 Two-way
5 Squid squirt
8 Saab model
12 Walking daintily
14 Sketch
15 History book feature
16 Ore source
17 German article
18 Emulates Manet
20 Relating to Swiss peaks
23 Commotion
24 Lusty look
25 Final part
28 Cote cry
29 Companies
30 Chic no more
32 Early baby, informally
34 Killer whale
35 Burnsian denials
36 Sir Francis —
37 Exonerates
40 Mound stat
41 Coconut provider
42 Cable channel
47 Soap additive
48 Not required
49 Go yachting
50 Lean- — (sheds)
51 Genuine

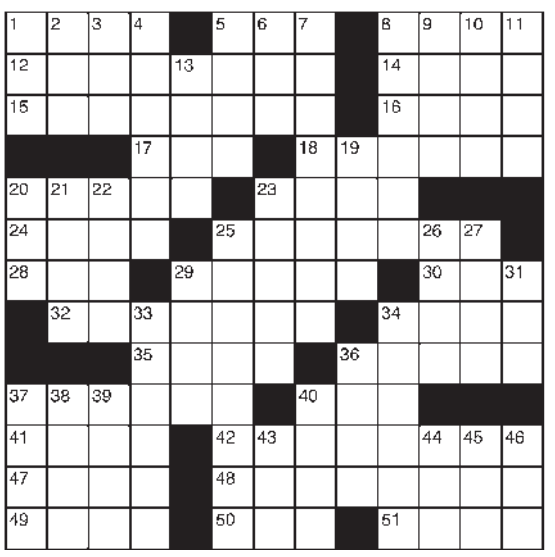
**DOWN**

1 Speck
2 Numerical prefix
3 $ dispenser
4 German art songs
5 "How sweet —!"
6 Dijon denial
7 Do a drummer's job
8 Regard highly
9 CNN anchor Burnett
10 Harangue
11 Is in debt
13 Scheme
19 Feels unwell
20 Cleric's garment
21 Bound
22 Anjou, for one
23 Ganges garments
25 Schedule opening
26 Filmmaker Ephron
27 Pond denizen
29 Dread
31 — kwon do
33 Canine coat
34 Speaker
36 Zwei follower
37 Tax prep advisors
38 In — land
39 Sci-fi race
40 New newts
43 Wall St. debut
44 Chemical suffix
45 Goat's cry
46 Right angle

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M | I | C | ■ | T | I | N | A | ■ | O | P | I | E |
| D | N | A | ■ | I | C | O | N | ■ | C | A | D | S |
| S | A | N | D | B | U | R | G | ■ | C | R | O | P |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | A | H | E | S | ■ | ■ | B | U | H | L | Y |
| S | A | D | A | T | ■ | B | I | O | L | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| A | L | I | T | ■ | S | A | N | D | T | R | A | P |
| G | M | A | ■ | M | A | R | Y | ■ | E | M | U | ■ |
| S | A | N | D | D | U | N | E | ■ | S | V | E | N |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | A | I | L | S | ■ | G | L | E | N | S |
| B | A | M | B | I | ■ | ■ | S | O | A | R | ■ | ■ |
| A | R | A | B | ■ | S | A | N | D | W | I | C | H |
| N | E | I | L | ■ | A | M | A | L | ■ | E | R | A |
| G | A | L | E | ■ | L | O | G | Y | ■ | S | U | N |

**Last Friday's answer 12-02**



**STUMPED?** For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Aaron Rodgers, 41; Britney Spears, 43; Monica Seles, 51; Rena Sofer, 56.

**Happy Birthday:** Simplify your life, take a step back and take a moment to think. Moderation, organization and decluttering will help you release people and possessions that weigh you down. Make room for what is meaningful to you, helps you focus on what makes sense and gives you a purpose that fills your heart with joy. Choose to be innovative and follow the path that gratifies. Make personal growth your goal. Your numbers are 5, 12, 19, 24, 32, 36, 47.

**ARIES** *(March 21-April 19):* Interact and adjust to suit your situation, but don't jeopardize your health or physical well-being. Question everything and everyone. Show interest and gain insight into the possibilities. Open doors that offer hope and promise, but be selective and aware of risks or scammers. When in doubt, say no. ✪✪✪✪✪

**TAURUS** *(April 20-May 20):* Pay attention to details and surpass expectations. A unique alteration will give you the edge you need to be competitive. Don't wait until action is necessary to reach your goal. When opportunity knocks, eliminate what you don't trust and surround yourself with facts, figures and trustworthy contributors. ✪✪✪

**GEMINI** *(May 21-June 20):* You'll be pulled in different directions. Refuse to lean toward razzle-dazzle offers that sound too good to be true. Distance yourself from peer pressure or unrealistic demands. Focus on what you can do to improve your life and meaningful relationships, and expand your knowledge and qualifications. ✪✪✪

**CANCER** *(June 21-July 22):* You can test something out, but don't buy into an idea with little merit. Exploring possible changes to improve your position or performance will bring good results. An energetic approach to investments and a healthy lifestyle will give you the boost you need to reach your goal. ✪✪✪

**LEO** *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Stretch your legs, exercise and spend time with people who make you think and have something worthwhile to contribute. Change things up to suit your needs. Refuse to let anyone take advantage of you financially or emotionally. Set high standards and do what's best for you. ✪✪✪

**VIRGO** *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Changing your surroundings will offer a different perspective regarding life lessons and your potential. Whether you travel to a spot you've never been before or refurbish your surroundings at home, it will help clear your head and give you hope for a brighter future. Self-improvement is favored. ✪✪✪✪

**LIBRA** *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Concentrate on learning something that helps you flourish. Connect with people who are already doing what you want to pursue. Gather knowledge, keep what resonates with you and discard what doesn't fit your agenda. It's up to you to set goals; don't wait for someone to step in and take over. ✪✪✪✪

**SCORPIO** *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Make your wishes clear and prepare to map out a plan that will encourage your success. Pour your energy into upgrading your skills, keeping up with the latest technology and sinking your teeth into what matters to you. Do what feels right and best, and don't look back. ✪✪✪

**SAGITTARIUS** *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Set the ground rules and head in a direction that makes you feel good about yourself and what you achieve. Put your effort into being self-sufficient and exercising your right to do things your way. It's time to satisfy your soul and cut loose what no longer satisfies your needs. ✪✪✪✪

## EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

**CAPRICORN** *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* A change at home that makes your life more convenient is within reach. Be willing to put in the time and effort, and you will be happy with the results and the cost you encounter. Refuse to hire someone to do something you can do yourself. Romance is favored. ✪✪✪

**AQUARIUS** *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Refuse to let uncertainty get in the way of progress. When in doubt, go to the source and gather the information that will put your mind at ease and give you the confidence to make a move. Trust yourself, and you'll avoid being misled by someone taking advantage of you. ✪✪✪✪

**PISCES** *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Take a moment to weigh the pros and cons of anything someone asks you to do or contribute to, and you'll avoid making an expensive mistake. Look inward and concentrate on being and doing your best; you'll get the results necessary to make your next move. Discipline leads to victory. ✪✪ Birthday Baby: You are intuitive, outgoing and flexible. You are passionate and hardworking.

*✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.*

# SUDOKU

**Conceptis Sudoku** *By Dave Green*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 7 | | | 2 | 1 | | 4 | |
| 6 | 2 | | | 9 | | | 1 | |
| 1 | | | 7 | 3 | | | 2 | |
| | 8 | | | 5 | | | 3 | 7 |
| | 3 | | 6 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 8 | |
| | 5 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 2 | 1 | | 4 |
| 7 | | | | | 8 | | 9 | |
| 3 | | 9 | | | 5 | 6 | | |
| 8 | | | | | 3 | | | |

Difficulty: ★ 12/2

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

***Friday's Answer***

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 8 |
| 7 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 2 |
| 4 | 3 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| 1 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 6 | 8 | 3 |
| 8 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 7 |
| 6 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 9 |
| 9 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 1 |
| 3 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 4 |

Difficulty: ★★★★ 11/29

©2024 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

## WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

**HOW TO PLAY:** All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

**CYBER MONDAY** Solution: 9 letters

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | S | M | A | N | O | I | T | C | A | S | N | A | R | T |
| V | E | T | I | S | B | E | W | R | S | L | A | E | D | E |
| I | E | D | F | E | S | I | T | R | E | V | D | A | N | T |
| R | E | L | R | I | P | C | R | E | D | I | T | I | O | A |
| T | E | L | I | O | G | Y | T | O | T | A | L | H | I | B |
| U | C | R | I | F | K | E | T | Ⓒ | I | N | H | E | S | L |
| A | O | E | L | B | O | B | Y | D | Ⓞ | S | O | A | I | E |
| L | M | V | I | T | O | R | E | S | E | Ⓓ | M | D | V | T |
| A | M | R | N | O | E | M | P | A | D | B | Ⓔ | S | E | E |
| T | E | E | K | V | L | H | S | R | W | N | I | E | L | N |
| I | R | S | I | A | S | O | A | I | L | I | A | T | E | R |
| G | C | L | I | A | N | C | L | I | C | K | F | R | T | E |
| I | E | C | L | A | P | T | O | P | I | L | E | I | B | T |
| D | O | F | F | E | R | N | G | B | A | R | G | A | I | N |
| S | N | O | I | T | O | M | O | R | P | H | O | N | E | I |

© 2024 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com 12/2

Advertise, Bargain, Books, Brands, Card, Click, Code, Credit, Deals, Debit, Delivery, Digital, E-commerce, Flash, Gifts, Headset, Home, Internet, Laptop, Link, Mobile, Offer, Online, Order, Phone, Pile, Profile, Promotions, Retail, Season, Server, Social Media, Tablet, Television, Total, Transaction, Type, Virtual, Website, Wi-Fi

**Last Saturday's Answer: Cathedral**

**Last Friday's answer : Clearance**

The NEW Volume 77 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com. or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

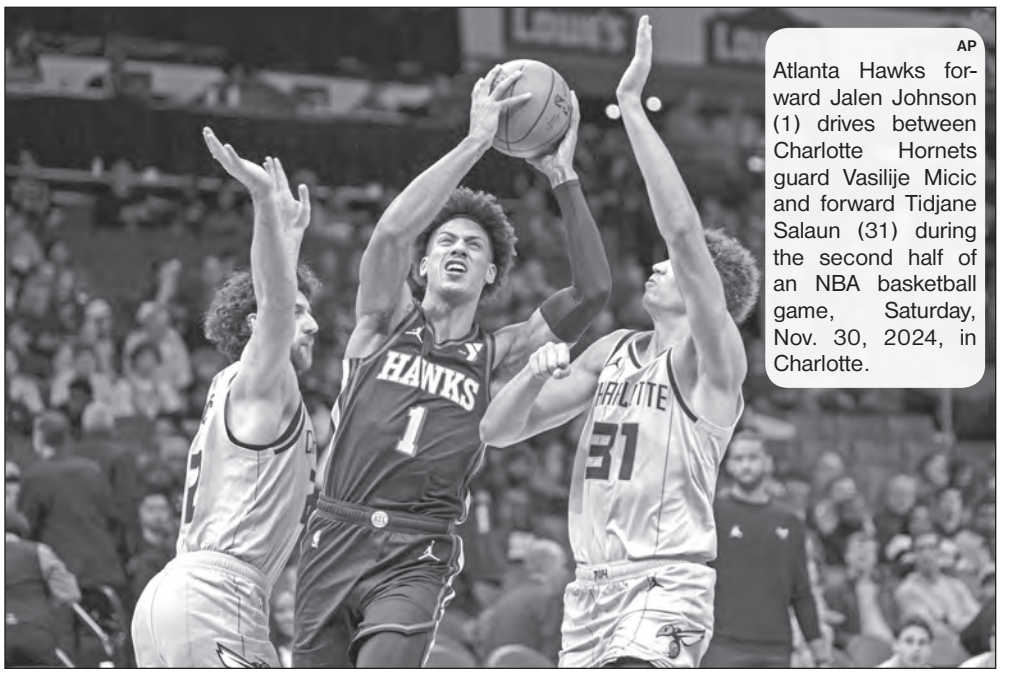
# Hawks hang on to beat Hornets for 3rd straight win

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.** (AP)—Jalen Johnson had 20 points and nine assists, De'Andre Hunter added 18 points and the Atlanta Hawks handed the Charlotte Hornets their fifth straight loss 107-104 on Saturday night.

Onyeka Okongwu added 16 points and 11 rebounds for the Hawks, who have won three straight. Trae Young and No. 1 overall draft pick Zaccharie Risacher each had 14 points.

Brandon Miller finished with 32 points for the Hornets and Josh Green added 17.

Miller's 3-pointer cut Atlanta's lead to one, but Hunter answered with two free throws with 9.7 seconds left. Charlotte had a chance to tie but Miller missed an off-balance 3 and Okongwu grabbed the rebound and made two free throws to seal the game.



AP

Atlanta Hawks forward Jalen Johnson (1) drives between Charlotte Hornets guard Vasilije Micic and forward Tidjane Salaun (31) during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, Nov. 30, 2024, in Charlotte.

### 76ERS 111, PISTONS 96

**DETROIT** (AP)—Tyrese Maxey scored 28 points and Philadelphia won their fourth game of the season by beating Detroit.

Jared McCain added 19 points and Ricky Council IV scored 17 for Philadelphia, which had lost seven of its previous eight games.

Malik Beasley had 19 points for the Pistons. Jaden Ivey had 15 points and Marcus Sasser scored 12. Simone Fontecchio had 11 rebounds for Detroit—the only player on either team to reach double figures in assists or rebounds.

### BUCKS 124, WIZARDS 114

**MILWAUKEE** (AP)—Giannis Antetokounmpo had 42 points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists in his return to Milwaukee's lineup and the Bucks won their sixth in a row by beating struggling Washington.

Antetokounmpo had missed the Bucks' 106-103 NBA Cup victory at Miami on Tuesday due to swelling in his left knee. The two-time MVP has three triple-doubles in the last six games he has played.

Antetokounmpo had 22 points, 15 rebounds and 12 assists in a 115-114 loss at Charlotte on Nov. 16. He had 37 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds in a 129-117 victory over the Indiana Pacers on Nov. 22.

Damian Lillard added 25 points and 10 assists while Brook Lopez scored 18 points on Saturday.

Jordan Poole had 31 points Malcolm Brogdon added 29 points and 11 rebounds for the Wizards, who have lost 14 straight.

### SUNS 113, WARRIORS 105

**PHOENIX** (AP)—Devin Booker scored 27 points, Kevin Durant added 21 and Phoenix beat Golden State.

Tyus Jones added 19 points and nine assists, making 7 of 9 shots, including 4 of 5 3-pointers. Grayson Allen added 17. The Suns made 18 of 35 (51.4%) shots from 3-point range.

Golden State has lost four in a row. Stephen Curry led the Warriors with 23 points but shot just 8 of 20 from the field. Andrew Wiggins added 18 points while Draymond Green had 13 points.

The Warriors trailed by 17 at halftime but cut the margin to 85-78 by the start of the fourth quarter after Curry poured in 15 points. Golden State went on a 9-0 run late in the fourth quarter to pull within 105-99 but Durant made a 3-pointer with 1:42 left to turn back the rally.

The Suns led 66-49 at halftime after making 14 of 21 (66.7%) of their 3-pointers

### MAVERICKS 106, JAZZ 94

**SALT LAKE CITY** (AP)—Kyrie Irving scored 30 points and Quentin Grimes had 24 points to power short-handed Dallas over Utah.

Dallas led the entire game despite playing without Luka Doncic (right wrist), Klay Thompson (left foot) and Dante Exum (right wrist). Naji Marshall left in the second quarter and didn't return because of illness.

P.J. Washington had 16 points and 10 rebounds for the Mavericks, who have won four of five games—all without Doncic.

The Jazz have lost seven of their last eight games. Lauri Markkanen scored 19 points and Walker Kessler had 18 points, 10 rebounds and five blocks for Utah.

The Mavericks led by as many as 20 in the first quarter, thanks to Grimes' quick start with four 3s in the quarter.

## Anthony Edwards calls his struggling Timberwolves `soft' and `just a bunch of little kids'

**MINNEAPOLIS** (AP)—In his four-plus NBA seasons, Anthony Edwards has never been afraid to speak his mind.

But the Minnesota Timberwolves star was particularly candid in a profanity-laced explanation of his team's recent struggles following a 115-104 loss to the Sacramento Kings on Wednesday night.

"I think it's we soft as (heck) as a team, internally," Edwards said. "Not to the other team, but internally, we soft. We can't talk to each other. Just a bunch of little kids. Just like we playing with a bunch of little kids. Everybody, the whole team. We just can't talk to each other. And we've got to figure it out, because we can't go down this road."

Minnesota reached the 2024 Western Conference finals. But the Timberwolves have lost four in a row and seven of nine after starting 6-3 this season. A lineup that experienced a significant shakeup late in the offseason with the Karl-Anthony Towns trade still looks disjointed at times.

That includes blowing a 12-point fourth-quarter lead against Sacramento a day after losing 117-111 in overtime to Houston at home.

"We look like frontrunners for sure tonight," Edwards said Wednesday. "We was down, nobody wanted to say nothing. We got up and everybody (was) cheering and (hyped up). We get down again and don't nobody say nothing. That's the definition of a frontrunner. We as a team, including myself, we all was frontrunners tonight."

AP

Minnesota Timberwolves guard Anthony Edwards (5) reacts to an official's call during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Sacramento Kings, Wednesday, Nov. 27, 2024, in Minneapolis.

"Everybody right now is on different agendas," he added. "I think that's one of the main culprits of why we're losing."

Edwards, who led the Timberwolves with 29 points on 9-of-24 shooting, didn't only admonish his teammates after the game. More than once, he could be seen communicating demonstratively in the huddle with Julius Randle, Rudy Gobert and others.

Randle and guard Donte DiVincenzo were the top gets in the October trade that sent Karl-Anthony Towns to New York three weeks before the start of the season. Both have experienced up-and-down starts to their Twin Cities tenures.

Towns, meanwhile, has settled in comfortably with the Knicks.

Edwards said this isn't just about the new guys, though.

"I'm talking about the whole team," Edwards said. "However many of us it is, all 15, we go into our own shell and we're just growing away from each other. It's obvious. We can see it. I can see it, the team can see it, the coaches can see it."

So can the fans, who voiced their collective displeasure more than once Wednesday night.

"The fans (are) booing us," said Edwards, whose team is 8-10 heading into Friday's game against the Los Angeles Clippers. "That (stuff) is crazy, man. We're getting booed in our home arena. That's so (freaking) disrespectful, it's crazy."

## NBA BRIEFS

### LaMelo Ball will miss at least 2 weeks with a left calf strain

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.** (AP)—The Charlotte Hornets will be without point guard LaMelo Ball for at least two weeks because of a strained left calf. Ball felt discomfort in his calf after Wednesday night's loss to the Miami Heat and did not play against the New York Knicks on Friday. The team said he will be reevaluated on Dec. 11, which is two weeks from the date of the original injury. Ball has been hot for the Hornets, averaging 40.3 points in his last four games. He is averaging a career-best 31.1 points and 4.7 3-pointers per game for the season, which ranks second in the NBA. He also is averaging 5.4 rebounds, 6.9 assists and 1.1 steals in 18 starts. Ball has had a history of injury problems, mostly to his ankles, since coming to the league as the No. 3 overall pick in the 2020 NBA draft. The only Hornets player to ever receive a max contract extension, Ball has played in just 202 games with 182 starts in five seasons. The team also said guard Tre Mann's lower back soreness has been diagnosed as a disk irritation. His absence from the lineup began on Nov. 23 against Milwaukee. He will continue his rehabilitation and be reevaluated in two weeks. "They are competitors and they want to be out there on the court to compete and hoop, but they also want to be out there for their teammates," Hornets coach Charles Lee said prior to Saturday night's game against the Atlanta Hawks. "I just walked past 'Melo as I was coming in here to do media, and he's like, 'I'm going to take care of everything I need to do on this return to play program and I'm going to attack it with the right mindset.' I have all the confidence in the world in our performance staff and in those guys."

### Westbro ok fined for obscene on-court gesture in Nuggets' blowout loss to Knicks

**NEW YORK** (AP)—The NBA fined Denver guard Russell Westbrook $35,000 on Friday for making an obscene gesture on the court in the fourth quarter of a 145-118 loss to the Knicks at Ball Arena. During the blowout loss on Monday, Westbrook appeared to make the gesture right in front of the New York bench after hitting a 3-pointer from the corner. In the game, Knicks guard OG Anunoby scored a career-high 40 points and Jalen Brunson had 23 points and 17 of New York's team record-tying 45 assists as the Knicks rode a torrid start. Westbrook scored 27 coming off the bench to lead the Nuggets.

# Chiefs recover botched snap by Raiders in closing seconds, clinch playoff berth

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** (AP)—The Kansas City Chiefs have made a habit of winning games in the most improbable of ways.

The way they beat the Raiders on Friday still had Patrick Mahomes and Co. shaking their heads in disbelief.

The two-time MVP watched from the sideline as Las Vegas drove within range of a winning field goal with 15 seconds left, only to botch the snap on its final offensive play, allowing the Chiefs to escape with a 19-17 victory that also secured their 10th consecutive playoff berth—the second-longest streak in NFL history.

"Obviously a big stop in a big moment that got us the win," Mahomes said.

The Raiders (2-10) had taken over at their own 8-yard line with just under two minutes to go, and quarterback Aidan O'Connell quickly moved them across midfield, eventually spiking the ball at the Kansas City 32 to stop the clock.

Rather than try for the winning field goal—Daniel Carlson had missed three from 50-plus—the Raiders lined up to run a play, hoping to gain a few yards with a throw to the sideline before time expired. But amid the roar of Arrowhead Stadium, rookie center Jackson Powers-Johnson snapped the ball when O'Connell wasn't expecting it, and it bounced off the QB's shoulder. Chiefs linebacker Nick Bolton pounced on it, and the recovery stood when a flag on the play turned out to be an illegal shift by the Raiders.

"I actually didn't watch," Raiders coach Antonio Pierce said of the fateful play. "That last play there was a lot going on, from the officiating to the flags to the ball being snapped."

Mahomes finished with 306 yards passing and a touchdown, and fill-in kicker Matt Wright made four field goals for the two-time defending Super Bowl champion Chiefs (11-1), who won their NFL record-extending 14th consecutive one-possession game.

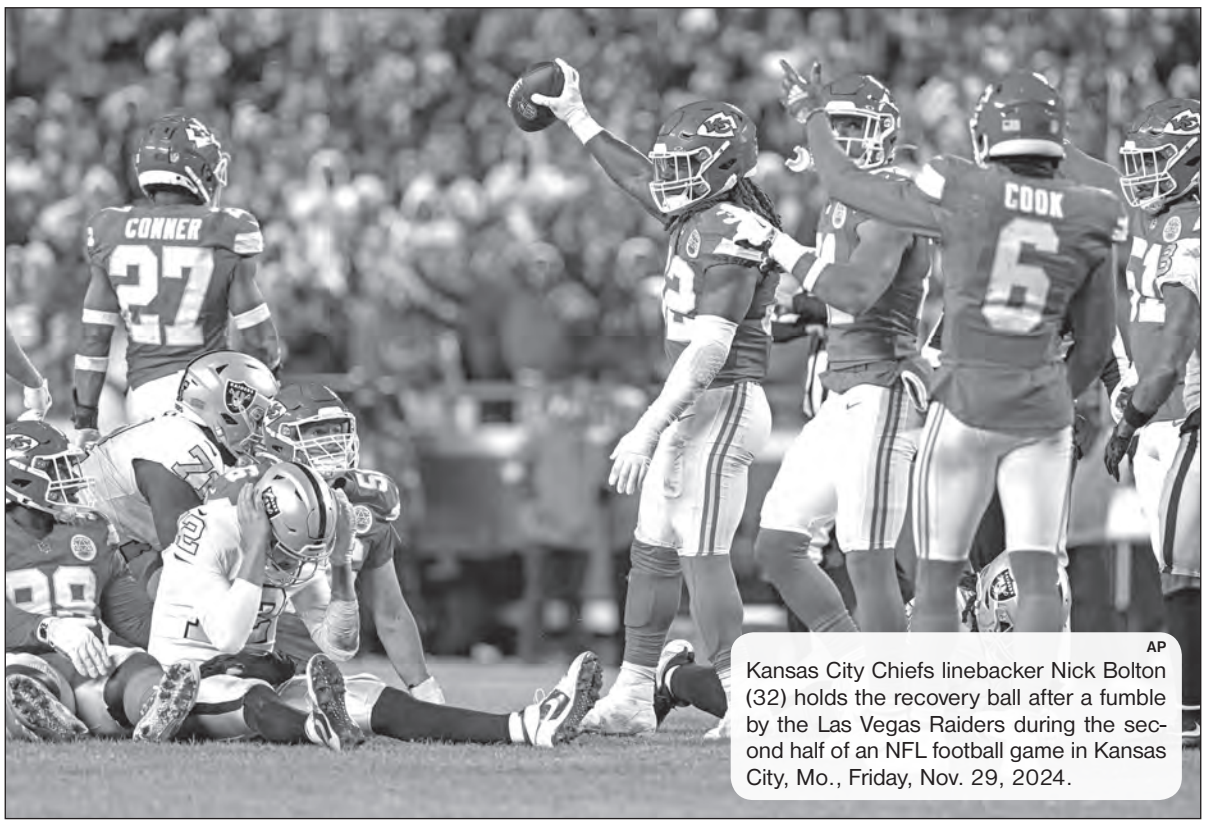
Like many of them, including last week's last-second win over Carolina, the Chiefs seemed to be in no mood to celebrate.

"I mean, we just hold ourselves to such a high standard. We don't feel like we're playing our best football," Mahomes said. "We have to find a way to build up to play great (as) a full, entire team. It's awesome that we're finding ways to get wins. That's what you're going for. But our goal is to get to the Super Bowl."

The Raiders had a chance to take the lead earlier in the fourth quarter, too, when O'Connell drove them across midfield. But the Chiefs forced three incompletions—George Karlaftis and Justin Reid batted down two—to bring up fourth down.

Carlson headed onto the field, but his 58-yard try with 2:21 remaining never got near the uprights.

O'Connell finished with 340 yards passing and two touchdowns for the Raiders, who have lost eight of nine to their bitter AFC West rivals. Brock Bowers had 10 catches for 140 yards and one of the scores.




AP

Kansas City Chiefs linebacker Nick Bolton (32) holds the recovery ball after a fumble by the Las Vegas Raiders during the second half of an NFL football game in Kansas City, Mo., Friday, Nov. 29, 2024.

"These guys battled until the very end, until the clock hit zero," Pierce said. "They believed we were going to win and fought their (butts) off to the very end. All phases contributed to help us get in that position, but Aiden did hell of a job. He stayed in the pocket, made big-time throws for us, pushed the ball down the field. The numbers say what they're going to say. I'm proud of my team, our team. I'm proud of the fight. We came up short yet again against the world champs. Twice now."

## LIONS 23, BEARS 20

**DETROIT** (AP)—The Detroit Lions have been dominant for much of the season, leading the league in point differential after routinely routing opponents.

Against Chicago, the Lions were good enough to extend their winning streak to 10 games.

Barely.

Jared Goff threw two touchdown passes to Sam LaPorta, Jake Bates made three field goals in the first half and Detroit held off the Bears 23-20 on Thursday.

"It was a crazy ending, right?" Goff asked.

Indeed.

The Bears had the ball in Lions territory late in the game with a chance to drive for a game-tying field goal or go-ahead touchdown, but they blew the opportunity.

Caleb Williams threw an incomplete pass as time expired from the Detroit 41 after being sacked with about 30 seconds left, allowing time to run off the clock even though Chicago had one more timeout.

"I'm focused on getting everyone back and getting everyone lined up," Williams said. "I don't have a microphone, so there is no communication with coach there. We could have taken a timeout, but if we hit that play, no one would be worried about it."

The NFC-leading Lions (11-1) have their best record after 12 games in team history and their 10-game winning streak ties a franchise record with the 1934 squad.

The Bears (4-8) have lost six straight, including four by a total of 10 points.

## COWBOYS 27, GIANTS 20

**ARLINGTON, Texas** (AP)—DeMarvion Overshown wasn't sure he could run down the pass he tipped and turn it into an interception for a touchdown.

The Dallas linebacker pulled it off, and now the chase is on for the Cowboys to try to dig out of a deep hole in pursuit of a fourth consecutive playoff trip, this time without franchise quarterback Dak Prescott.

Overshown's dynamic pick-6 from 23 yards put Dallas in front for good, Rico Dowdle ran for a score in his first career 100-yard game and the Cowboys held on for a 27-20 Thanksgiving Day victory over the New York Giants.

Cooper Rush threw a TD pass, and Dowdle finished with 112 yards Thursday as the Cowboys (5-7) ended a six-game home losing streak going back to a wild-card playoff loss to Green Bay last season.

Dallas has consecutive victories coming off a five-game losing streak but still plenty of work ahead to get back in the postseason picture. Prescott tore a hamstring in Week 9 of what was already a reeling season.

"We just needed that one last week, kind of get the ball rolling, felt that victory feeling in the locker postgame last week," Rush said of the wild 34-26 victory at Washington. "Everything's kind of coming together, feeling good about it."

Drew Lock, who started in place of the injured Tommy DeVito a week after the benching and subsequent release of Daniel Jones, lost a fumble following Overshown's pick-6 in a seventh consecutive loss for the Giants (2-10).

Lock ran for 57 yards and a touchdown that ended up being too late to avoid New York's eighth consecutive loss to its NFC East rival as the Giants were eliminated from playoff contention.

"This is one of my first times to be able to come in and play a full game with these guys and show them what I can do," Lock said. "Minus the turnovers and a few things, it was up and down. Some good. Some bad."

The Giants had their first lead since Week 5 before Overshown put the Cowboys back in front after they had led for just 2 minutes, 15 seconds during their six-game skid at AT&T Stadium.

Leading 7-6, Lock tried to flip a screen pass to Devin Singletary after the running back had been overpowered trying to block Overshown.

The second-year linebacker ended up between Lock and Singletary, tipped the pass into the air toward the end zone, used his speed to run it down and scored untouched.

"I was thinking, 'Hey, this is a good time to have those afterburners going,'" said Overshown, who missed his rookie season with a knee injury. "I was able to kick in some nitrous, and we were dancing in the end zone after that."

Overshown also recovered Lock's fumble on the opening possession of the second half to set up Rush's 2-yard TD pass to Brandin Cooks.

He deposited that ball into one of the oversized Salvation Army red kettles made famous by Ezekiel Elliott nearly a decade ago and isn't sure what happened to it. The TD ball might go to his son.

## PACKERS 30, DOLPHINS 178

**GREEN BAY, Wis.** (AP)—Jordan Love celebrated the Green Bay Packers' victory on Thanksgiving by taking a bite out of a turkey leg and raising it in the air.

His feast was a long time coming.

Love led the Packers to a Thanksgiving Day triumph in Detroit last year but wasn't given a turkey leg afterward, as is customary in these televised postgame interviews. His teammates vowed to make sure Love got a turkey leg this time, and he earned it by throwing two touchdown passes to Jayden Reed in a 30-17 win over the Miami Dolphins on Thursday night.

"To be able to come in here, get the win, get the turkey leg after, it was very delicious," said Love, who went 21 of 28 for 274 yards. "Just a little something to celebrate."

Josh Jacobs brought a turkey platter into the locker room as Green Bay (9-3) commemorated a third straight victory. The Packers, who have won seven of their last eight games, built a 27-3 lead and made a goal-line stand to thwart a comeback attempt.

Miami (5-7) continued its recent history of struggling in cold weather. The kickoff temperature at Lambeau Field was 27 degrees (-2.7 Celsius) with 10 mph winds, light flurries and a wind chill of 18.

"I would say, from my standpoint and our team's standpoint, we're not going to use any of that as an excuse for why we didn't get the start that we wanted," said Dolphins quarterback Tua Tagovailoa, who was 37 of 46 for 365 yards with two touchdowns despite getting sacked five times.

The Dolphins have lost their past 12 regular-season or postseason games in which the temperature at kickoff has been below 40 degrees (4.4 Celsius). The Dolphins' most recent victory in a game with a kickoff temperature at 40 or lower was a 34-31 overtime triumph at Buffalo on Dec. 24, 2016.

Green Bay is playing three games in a 12-day stretch. The Packers beat the San Francisco 49ers 38-10 on Sunday and will visit the NFC North-leading Detroit Lions next Thursday night.

"I thought we played well for it being a short week," Packers safety Xavier McKinney said. "I thought we came out there and had the right mindset. And we started fast, and that was the key to today's win."

Love and Reed connected on touchdown completions of 3 and 12 yards, Jacobs scored from 1 yard out and Brandon McManus kicked two field goals as Green Bay led 27-3 midway through the third quarter.

Miami tried to rally.

Tagovailoa's 14-yard pass to De'Von Achane—and a 2-point conversion pass to Jaylen Waddle—cut Green Bay's lead to 27-11 with 2:43 left in third. After Miami stopped Jacobs for a 2-yard loss on third-and-1 to force a punt, the Dolphins drove again and had second-and-goal at the 1 early in the fourth quarter.

"We fought hard," Dolphins defensive lineman Calais Campbell said. "We have no quit in us. I really genuinely believed we were going to give ourselves a chance to win at the end."

Green Bay's goal-line defense vanquished those hopes. After Rashan Gary stopped Achane on second down and Tagovailoa couldn't connect with Jonnu Smith on third down, Quay Walker made a fourth-down sack with 9:33 remaining.

A 49-yard completion from Love to Jacobs then set up McManus' 33-yard field goal with 5:02 left. Miami completed the scoring on a deflected 12-yard touchdown pass from Tagovailoa to Tyreek Hill with 3:04 remaining.

Miami's slow start enabled the Packers to take command.

# Ohtani seeks $325K worth of baseball cards from ex-interpreter

By HALLIE GOLDEN
Associated Press

Baseball star Shohei Ohtani wants his former interpreter to hand over hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of baseball cards he says were fraudulently bought using his money.

The Los Angeles Dodgers star is also requesting Ippei Mizuhara, who previously pleaded guilty to bank and tax fraud for stealing nearly $17 million from the unsuspecting athlete, return signed collectible baseball cards depicting Ohtani that were in Mizuhara's "unauthorized and wrongful possession," according to court documents filed Tuesday.

AP

Ippei Mizuhara, left, stands next to Los Angeles Dodgers baseball player Shohei Ohtani, right, during an interview at Dodger Stadium, Feb. 3, 2024.

The legal filing alleges Mizuhara accessed Ohtani's bank account beginning around November 2021, changing his security protocols so that he could impersonate him to authorize wire transfers. By 2024, Mizuhara had used that money to buy about $325,000 worth of baseball cards at online resellers eBay and Whatnot, according to the court documents.

Mizuhara's attorney, Michael G. Freedman, declined to comment on the filing.

Mizuhara pleaded guilty in June to spending millions from Ohtani's Arizona bank account to cover his growing gambling bets and debts with an illegal bookmaker, as well as his own medical bills and the $325,000 worth of baseball cards.

Mizuhara is due to be sentenced in January after pleading guilty to one count of bank fraud and one count of subscribing to a false tax return, crimes that carry a potential sentence of more than 30 years in federal prison. He also could be on the hook for restitution to Ohtani that could total nearly $17 million, as well as more than $1 million to the IRS. And as a legal permanent resident who has a green card, he might be deported to Japan.

Mizuhara stood by Ohtani's side for many of the Japanese sensation's career highlights, from serving as his catcher during the Home Run Derby at the 2021 All-Star Game, to being there for his two American League MVP wins and his record-shattering $700 million, 10-year deal with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Off the field, Mizuhara became Ohtani's friend and confidant. He famously resigned from the Los Angeles Angels during the 2021 MLB lockout so he could keep speaking to Ohtani—he was rehired after a deal was struck—and their wives reportedly socialized.

But Mizuhara gambled it all away, betting tens of millions of dollars that weren't his to wager on international soccer, the NBA, the NFL and college football—though prosecutors said he never bet on baseball.

## CNMI

*From page 16*

Billie Jean King Cup experience was unforgettable.

"I was given the chance to participate in the Billie Jean King Cup to proudly represent my country and it's an honor to play for the NMI. There's a lot of pride playing for your team because you are surrounded by your teammates and coach who are all rooting for you. I was able to meet other girls and create new friendships which made the trip a new experience as well."

NMITA president and CNMI sports hall of famer Jeff Race also congratulated Tan and company for the historic promotion to Group II of the Billie Jean King Cup.

"Incredible effort from our amazing Billie Jean King Cup team. A fantastic performance in making history. Congratulations Lydia, Carol, Isabel, Asia and Hye Jin on your achievement!"

Last Friday, the CNMI beat Macau to finalize its entry to the playoff match against Myanmar.

Heras gave the team the lead when she defeated Macau's Weng Si Leong in a tightrope, 6-4, 7-6. Lee then clinched the tie when she quickly dispatched Jamie Lau, 6-1, 6-3. Raulerson and Elliott then capped it off with 6-4, 7-5 victory over Lau and Si Nok Ho to send the NMI to the playoff.

Tan said the team did great against Macau but the match of the day was Heras' win against Leong.

"Isabel played the first match and she was down on 3-4 and broke her opponent's serve to 4-4. Then she held her serve to make it 5-4. Then she broke Leong's serve and took the first set 6-4. On the second set, she had two match point at 5-4 and went to five deuces and could not close the match point. It went to 5-5 and lost her serve to 5-6 to Leong. She then broke Leong's serve and came to a 6-6 tiebreak. In the tiebreak, it was back and forth to 7-6 and Isabel managed to close the match to 8-6. It was a nail-biting tiebreak."

She also heaped praised on Lee.

"Carol was super steady and cruising with an easy win, 6-1, 6-3. Carol is the second-best player in the tournament after the Philippine netter (Alex Eala) with a WTA ranking of 150."

Tan also gave kudos to Raulerson and Eliott for their fine play in the doubles.

"Both Hye Jin and Asia played their best tennis today. Both of them volleyed very well today and made most of their points on their volleys."

## AGE

*From page 16*

proceeds are going toward our athletics programs, future race and track events and off-island competitions this coming 2025."

He then said, "Our event would never be possible without the dedication and hard work of our partners, sponsors, volunteers and officials. Thank you to our sponsors: Joeten, MARPAC, and Triple J for supporting another successful Turkey Trot.

Additional thank yous were made to their partners: Department of Public Safety, Kagman High School National Honor Society, Saipan Southern High School National Honor Society, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., Marianas Health Services, and Run Saipan.

Up next this month are the Run Saipan Dash and Splash on Dec. 14, Northern Marianas Athletics Annual Christmas Island Relay on the 21st, and the annual 1-mile road race Run from 2024 by Run Saipan on Dec. 31.

## WBSC

*From page 16*

They then pummeled the CNMI's pitching and defense with 11 runs in the second, and nine more runs in the third. The game ended early due to run mercy ruling as CNMI could only score one run from Barcinas.

They then played against host Guam in the afternoon and lost, 4-10.

Guam struck first and scored one in the first, two each in the second and third, then one in the fourth for a 5-0 lead.

The CNMI then made an attempt to chip at their lead at the bottom of the fourth with a run by Khoen Torres for a 1-5 game. Lennox Sablan and Jo'ell Herman would then score to make it 3-5. Guam would add four more in the last two innings, while CNMI scored just one more run from Barcinas for a 4-10 final.

Last Saturday, it was a rematch against Australia but they fell once again, 6-19.

The tourney was a double-round robin format.

Despite their loss, head coach Ian Norita said, "the boys did an awesome job overall. There were a lot [of] first-time jitters in their first game, but every game after that the boys came back better and stronger! Our last game vs. Guam showed it. We were leading up until later in the game, Guam came back but the boys never gave up."

He added, "I'm proud of my boys and thankful for my coaches and all the parents and supporters from the CNMI. I think this was a great first-time experience; great work for only three months of prep. The boys had fun and were proud to represent NMI"

As for Dylan Barcinas he said, "we were nervous but I knew my boys would bounce back because I know what they can do. We had a lot [of] fun together with the coaches and we made some new friends from Guam and Australia, we even had them cheering for us. I just wanna say thank you to everyone."

The CNMI U12 Baseball Team sluggers were Skyler Leon Guerrero, Lennox Sablan, Elijah Babauta, Liam Sablan, Nate Nekai, Dylan Barcinas, Khoen Torres, Jo'ell Passi Herman, Scott Muna, Juan Damian, Denzel Kaipat, Izaiah Haro, Nathaniel Neth, Keoni Rosario, Damian Sablan, and Roque Camacho Jr.

The coaching staff included Calvani Deleon Guerrero, Ian Norita, Nick Nekai, Kyle Hocog, and Herman Kintol.

The team captain was Dylan Barcinas, while Damian Sablan was their co-captain.

Guam wrapped the tourney off with a perfect 3-0 record, while Australia had two wins and one loss.

According to their website, the WBSC is the international governing body for the sport of baseball/softball including all the related disciplines. The WBSC has 190 (183 full members, seven provisional members) national federations and 14 associated members in 138 countries and territories across Asia, Africa, the Americas, Europe and Oceania, which represent a united baseball/softball sports movement that encompasses over 65 million athletes and attracts approximately 150 million fans to stadiums worldwide annually.

## TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES
### NBA STANDINGS

**EASTERN CONFERENCE**

| Atlantic Division | W | L | Pct | GB |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Boston | 16 | 3 | .842 | – |
| New York | 11 | 8 | .579 | 5 |
| Brooklyn | 9 | 11 | .450 | 7½ |
| Toronto | 5 | 15 | .250 | 11½ |
| Philadelphia | 4 | 14 | .222 | 11½ |
| **Southeast Division** | | | | |
| Orlando | 14 | 7 | .667 | – |
| Miami | 9 | 8 | .529 | 3 |
| Atlanta | 10 | 11 | .476 | 4 |
| Charlotte | 6 | 14 | .300 | 7½ |
| Washington | 2 | 16 | .111 | 10½ |
| **Central Division** | | | | |
| Cleveland | 17 | 3 | .850 | – |
| Milwaukee | 10 | 9 | .526 | 6½ |
| Indiana | 9 | 11 | .450 | 8 |
| Detroit | 9 | 13 | .409 | 9 |
| Chicago | 8 | 13 | .381 | 9½ |

**WESTERN CONFERENCE**

| Southwest Division | W | L | Pct | GB |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Houston | 14 | 6 | .700 | – |
| Memphis | 13 | 7 | .650 | 1 |
| Dallas | 12 | 8 | .600 | 2 |
| San Antonio | 10 | 9 | .526 | 3½ |
| New Orleans | 4 | 16 | .200 | 10 |
| **Northwest Division** | | | | |
| Oklahoma City | 15 | 4 | .789 | – |
| Denver | 10 | 7 | .588 | 4 |
| Minnesota | 9 | 10 | .474 | 6 |
| Portland | 8 | 12 | .400 | 7½ |
| Utah | 4 | 15 | .211 | 11 |
| **Pacific Division** | | | | |
| Golden State | 12 | 7 | .632 | – |
| Phoenix | 11 | 8 | .579 | 1 |
| L.A. Lakers | 11 | 8 | .579 | 1 |
| L.A. Clippers | 12 | 9 | .571 | 1 |
| Sacramento | 9 | 11 | .450 | 3½ |

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES
### NFL STANDINGS

**AMERICAN CONFERENCE**

| East | W | L | T | Pct | PF | PA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Buffalo | 9 | 2 | 0 | .818 | 320 | 214 |
| Miami | 5 | 7 | 0 | .417 | 232 | 266 |
| N.Y. Jets | 3 | 8 | 0 | .273 | 204 | 242 |
| New England | 3 | 9 | 0 | .250 | 197 | 282 |
| **South** | | | | | | |
| Houston | 7 | 5 | 0 | .583 | 285 | 268 |
| Indianapolis | 5 | 7 | 0 | .417 | 242 | 274 |
| Tennessee | 3 | 8 | 0 | .273 | 202 | 290 |
| Jacksonville | 2 | 9 | 0 | .182 | 208 | 316 |
| **North** | | | | | | |
| Pittsburgh | 8 | 3 | 0 | .727 | 252 | 186 |
| Baltimore | 8 | 4 | 0 | .667 | 364 | 294 |
| Cincinnati | 4 | 7 | 0 | .364 | 297 | 296 |
| Cleveland | 3 | 8 | 0 | .273 | 186 | 267 |
| **West** | | | | | | |
| x-Kansas City | 11 | 1 | 0 | .917 | 289 | 235 |
| L.A. Chargers | 7 | 4 | 0 | .636 | 243 | 175 |
| Denver | 7 | 5 | 0 | .583 | 264 | 202 |
| e-Las Vegas | 2 | 10 | 0 | .167 | 223 | 333 |

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

| East | W | L | T | Pct | PF | PA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Philadelphia | 9 | 2 | 0 | .818 | 296 | 199 |
| Washington | 7 | 5 | 0 | .583 | 334 | 277 |
| Dallas | 5 | 7 | 0 | .417 | 248 | 339 |
| e-N.Y. Giants | 2 | 10 | 0 | .167 | 183 | 279 |
| **South** | | | | | | |
| Atlanta | 6 | 5 | 0 | .545 | 244 | 274 |
| Tampa Bay | 5 | 6 | 0 | .455 | 309 | 273 |
| New Orleans | 4 | 7 | 0 | .364 | 262 | 260 |
| Carolina | 3 | 8 | 0 | .273 | 194 | 340 |
| **North** | | | | | | |
| Detroit | 11 | 1 | 0 | .917 | 383 | 203 |
| Minnesota | 9 | 2 | 0 | .818 | 274 | 197 |
| Green Bay | 9 | 3 | 0 | .750 | 318 | 240 |
| Chicago | 4 | 8 | 0 | .333 | 241 | 240 |
| **West** | | | | | | |
| Arizona | 6 | 5 | 0 | .545 | 244 | 236 |
| Seattle | 6 | 5 | 0 | .545 | 246 | 244 |
| L.A. Rams | 5 | 6 | 0 | .455 | 233 | 276 |
| San Francisco | 5 | 6 | 0 | .455 | 260 | 260 |

e-eliminated from playoffs | x-clinched playoff spot

Hawks hang on to beat Hornets for 3rd straight win

PAGE 13

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Ohtani seeks $325K worth of baseball cards from ex-interpreter

PAGE 15

# CNMI promoted to Group II after beating Myanmar

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The 2024 CNMI Billie Jean King Cup team, from left, Asia Raulerson, Hye Jin Eliott, Isabel Heras, Carol Lee, and team captain Lydia Tan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The 2024 CNMI Billie Jean King Cup team poses before their tie against Myanmar last Friday in the 2024 Billie Jean King Cup Asia/Oceania Group III finals in Manama, Bahrain.

**By MARK RABAGO**
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
EDITOR

The CNMI has been promoted to Asia/Oceania Group II next year after it beat Myanmar, 2-1, in the crossover Asia/Oceania Group III finals of the 2024 Billie Jean King Cup competition last Saturday in Manama, Bahrain.

CNMI No. 2 Isabel Heras lost the first singles match after succumbing to Nilar Win, 3-6, 2-6. CNMI No. 1 Carol Lee, however, like she often did during the weeklong competition, equalized the tie following a masterful 6-0, 6-0 blanking of Htay Htay Myint.

In the doubles to decide what team advances to Group II, Lee teamed up with Heras to pummel Win and Thiri Zoun, 6-1, 6-3, as the CNMI delegation to Bahrain exploded in celebration for the victorious campaign in Manama.

Team captain Lydia Tan, herself a former CNMI national player, was ecstatic after the women clinched the promotion by beating the Southeast Asian nation of more than 54 million.

"We came to Bahrain and set our goal to get promoted and we did it. Could not be happier as a team captain and first time in this Billie Jean King Cup. This is a historic moment for the NMI! Thank you to these incredible ladies—Isabel Heras, Carol Lee, Asia Raulerson, and Hye Jin Eliott—that has made the NMI proud. Kudos to all four lovely players."

The CNMI beat No. 1 seed Vietnam on Day 1, 2-1, then swept Brunei in its next assignment, 3-0. On Day 3, the CNMI booked its ticket to the finals after beating Macau, 2-1.

"We would like to thank the Bahrain Tennis Federation for hosting, ITF officials, ball kids, and everyone for making this Billie Jean King Cup successful. Congratulations to the Philippine team too after they also got promoted to Group II next year. Lastly, huge congratulations to Team NMI and these four ladies. The have definitely made the NMI proud!"

Lee, for her part, said Myanmar gave them a tough challenge and she's thankful Team NMI pulled through and will play in Group II in the Billie Jean King Cup in 2025.

"It was a tough team to play against, but we managed to compete and maintain our intensity throughout the matches. I want to express my gratitude to my team, the people back on Saipan who have been supporting us, and NMITA (Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association) for making it possible for us to participate in the Billie Jean King Cup. Congratulations to the Philippine team on their promotion to Group II, and a big thank you to the Bahrain Tennis Association for hosting such a wonderful event. I also deeply appreciate everyone and every organization who poured their hearts into making this event a success for all of us," she said.

Doubles specialist Raulerson also was on Cloud 9 after clinching the promotion to Group II next year.

"Our team did a very good job at being No. 1. We were the smallest nation in the competition and we somehow still managed to come out on top. I am proud of my teammates."

Raulerson's doubles teammate, Eliott, said, overall, her

See CNMI on Page 15

# CNMI U12 debuts in WBSC qualifiers

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The CNMI's U12 baseball team poses for a photo outside Antonio B. Won Pat International Airport before their debut in the 2024 U12 Baseball World Baseball Softball Confederation Qualification Tournament in Guam last Wednesday.

**By LEIGH GASES**
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI's U12 baseball team made its debut and dropped all four of their games in the 2024 U12 Baseball World Baseball Softball Confederation Qualification Tournament in Guam.

The 16-player team chosen by the Natibu Sports Association and the Saipan Baseball League went head-to-head in a rematch against host Guam yesterday, where, in a close game, they lost, 11-15.

The CNMI team scored two runs in the first, and were neck-and-neck, 2-2, after Guam retaliated at the bottom of the inning.

The CNMI's Nethaniel Neth, Dylan Barcinas, Liam Sablan, and Nathan Nekai scored a run each in the second for a 6-2 lead. Guam bounced back, however, as they scored four in the third after one run by CNMI for a narrow, 6-7 game.

A back-and-forth battle ensued, and it was all knotted up, 11-11, in the fifth inning. Guam then pulled ahead 15-11 after a breakdown in CNMI's pitching and held on to win as CNMI failed to produce in the final inning.

The CNMI first took on Australia last Friday morning and lost, 1-26.

The Aussies had a run spree that began in the first inning as they scored six.

See WBSC on Page 15

# Age group winners also gobble up turkey

LEIGH GASES

Northern Marianas Athletics' Mt. Tapochau Turkey Trot 2024 runners pose for a group photo at the top of Mt. Tapochau after the race last Thanksgiving morning.

**By LEIGH GASES**
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The age group winners for the Northern Marianas Athletics' Mt. Tapochau Turkey Trot 2024 also took home and gobbled up turkeys after their efforts up the excruciating 4.2-mile uphill trek up the highest peak on Thanksgiving Day.

Besides overall winners Victor Nash Santos and Akiko Miller, Quido Lucas Jambor won first place in the boys U12 division with a time of 47:54. Angela Yu was first in the girls division at 1:06:41.

In the 17U division, siblings Landen and Addalee Taflinger came in first. Landen finished at 42:37, while Addalee clocked in at 51:18.

Daryn Roufs came in first in the 30-39 age group with a time of 35:33, while Sarah Ashley was first in the women's at 57:03.

Rob Zarajczyk had the fastest time in the 40-49 age group at 47:23, while Shawna Brennfleck topped the women's at 52:51.

In the 50-59 age group, Krista Hawley was first in the women's division at 51:16, while James Abuy was first in the men's at 52:42.

And, NMI National Tennis Team coach Jeff Race was the fastest in the 60+ age group with a time of 58:20, while Elizabeth Kohnen clocked in first in the women's division at 1:04:14.

Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr. then said after the race, "On behalf of coach Elias [Rangamar] and I and the rest of Northern Marianas Athletics, thank you to our runners and walkers today. We do this for the love of our community. It was a wonderful turnout with over 150 participants. We wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. All

See AGE on Page 15